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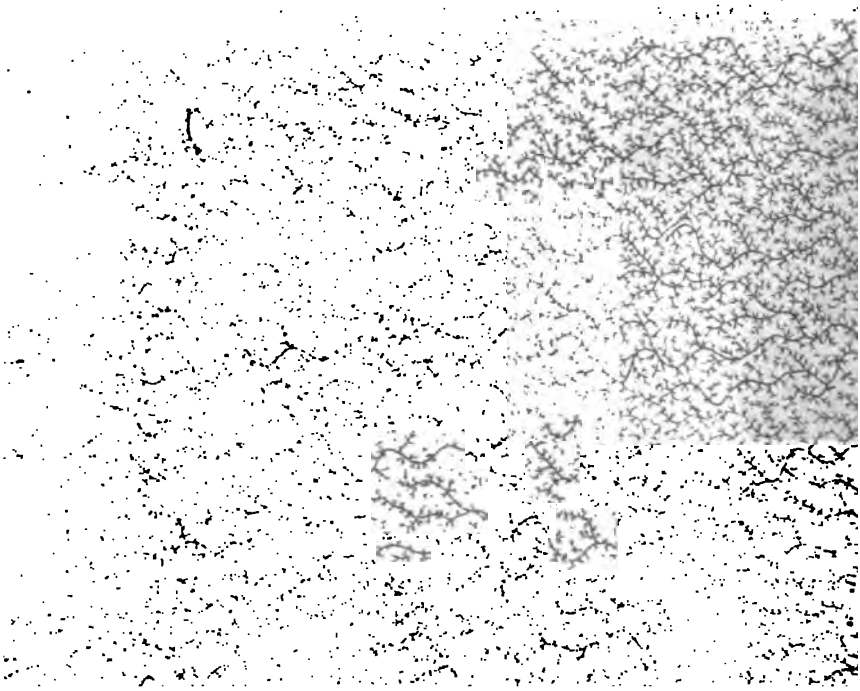

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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D.

A NEW EDITION,

IN SIX VOLUMES.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

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THE

RAMBLER.

No. 67. Tuesday, November 6, 1750.

Αἰδ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος,
Καλῶς βλέπουσιν ὄμμασι, μέλλουσι δέ. Eurip.

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on Hope;
Delusive Hope still points to distant good,
To good that mocks approach.

There is no temper so generally indulged as Hope: other passions operate by starts on particular occasions, or in certain parts of life; but hope begins with the first power of comparing our actual with our possible state, and attends us through every stage and period, always urging us forward to new acquisitions, and holding out some distant blessing to our view; promising us either relief from pain, or increase of happiness.

Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity, would, without this comfort, be insupportable; nor does it appear that the happiest lot of terrestrial existence can set us above the want of this general blessing; or that life, when the gifts of nature and of fortune are accumulated upon it, would not still be wretched, were it not elevated and delighted by the expectation of some new possession, of some enjoyment yet behind, by which the wish shall be at last satisfied, and the heart filled up to its utmost extent.

Hope is, indeed, very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts

of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompensing the delay by a greater bounty.

I was musing on this strange inclination which every man feels to deceive himself, and considering the advantages and dangers proceeding from this gay prospect of futurity, when, falling asleep, on a sudden I found myself placed in a garden, of which my sight could descry no limits. Every scene about me was gay and gladsome, light with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes: the ground was painted with all the variety of spring, and all the choir of nature was singing in the groves. When I had recovered from the first raptures, with which the confusion of pleasure had for a time entranced me, I began to take a particular and deliberate view of this delightful region. I then perceived that I had yet higher gratifications to expect, and that, at a small distance from me, there were brighter flowers, clearer fountains, and more lofty groves, where the birds, which I yet heard but faintly, were exerting all the power of melody. The trees about me were beautiful with verdure, and fragrant with blossoms; but I was tempted to leave them by the sight of ripe fruits, which seemed to hang only to be plucked. I therefore walked hastily forwards, but found, as I proceeded, that the colours of the field faded at my approach, the fruit fell before I reached it, the birds flew, still singing before me, and though I pressed onward with great celerity, I was still in sight of pleasures of which I could not yet gain the possession, and which seemed to mock my diligence, and to retire as I advanced.

Though I was confounded with so many alternations of joy and grief, I yet persisted to go forward, in hopes that these fugitive delights would in time be overtaken. At length I saw an innumerable multitude of every age and sex, who seemed all to partake of some general felicity: for every cheek was flushed with confidence, and every eye sparkled with eagerness; yet each appeared to have some particular and secret pleasure, and very few were willing to communicate their intentions, or extend their concern beyond themselves. Most of them seemed, by the rapidity of their motion, too busy to gratify the curiosity of a stranger, and therefore I was content for a while to gaze upon them, without interrupting them with troublesome inquiries. At last I observed one man worn with time, and unable to struggle in the crowd; and, therefore, supposing him more at leisure, I began to accost him: but he turned from me with anger, and told me he must not be disturbed, for the great hour of pro-

jection was now come, when Mercury should lose his wings, and slavery should no longer dig the mine for gold.

I left him, and attempted another, whose softness of mien, and easy movement, gave me reason to hope for a more agreeable reception; but he told me, with a low bow, that nothing would make him more happy than an opportunity of serving me, which he could not now want, for a place which he had been twenty years soliciting would be soon vacant. From him I had recourse to the next, who was departing in haste to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who by the course of nature could not live long. He that followed was preparing to dive for treasure in a new invented bell; and another was on the point of discovering the longitude.

Being thus rejected wheresoever I applied myself for information, I began to imagine it best to desist from inquiry, and try what my own observation would discover: but seeing a young man, gay and thoughtless, I resolved upon one more experiment, and was informed that I was in the garden of Hope, the daughter of Desire, and that all those whom I saw thus tumultuously bustling round me, were incited by the promises of Hope, and hastening to seize the gifts which she held in her hand.

I turned my sight upward, and saw a goddess in the bloom of youth sitting on a throne: around her lay all the gifts of fortune, and all the blessings of life were spread abroad to view; she had a perpetual gaiety of aspect, and every one imagined that her smile, which was impartial and general, was directed to himself, and triumphed in his own superiority to others, who had conceived the same confidence from the same mistake.

I then mounted an eminence, from which I had a more extensive view of the whole place, and could with less perplexity consider the different conduct of the crowds that filled it. From this station I observed, that the entrance into the garden of Hope was by two gates, one of which was kept by Reason, and the other by Fancy. Reason was surly and scrupulous, and seldom turned the key without many interrogatories, and long hesitation: but Fancy was a kind and gentle portress, she held her gate wide open, and welcomed all equally to the district under her superintendency: so that the passage was crowded by all those who either feared the examination of Reason, or had been rejected by her.

From the gate of Reason there was a way to the throne of Hope, by a craggy, slippery, and winding path, called the *Strait of Difficulty*, which those who entered with the permission of the guard, endeavoured to climb. But though

they surveyed the way very carefully before they began to rise, and marked out the several stages of their progress, they commonly found unexpected obstacles, and were obliged frequently to stop on the sudden, where they imagined the way plain and even. A thousand intricacies embarrassed them, a thousand slips threw them back, and a thousand pitfalls impeded their advance. So formidable were the dangers, and so frequent the miscarriages, that many returned from the first attempt, and many fainted in the midst of the way, and only a very small number were led up to the summit of Hope, by the hand of Fortitude. Of these few the greater part, when they had obtained the gift which Hope had promised them, regretted the labour which it cost, and felt in their success the regret of disappointment; the rest retired with their prize, and were led by Wisdom to the bowers of Content.

Turning then towards the gate of Fancy, I could find no way to the seat of Hope; but though she sat full in view, and held out her gifts with an air of invitation, which filled every heart with rapture, the mountain was, on that side, inaccessibly steep, but so channelled and shaded, that none perceived the impossibility of ascending it, but each imagined himself to have discovered a way to which the rest were strangers. Many expedients were indeed tried by this industrious tribe, of whom some were making themselves wings, which others were contriving to actuate by the perpetual motion. But with all their labour, and all their artifices, they never rose above the ground, or quickly fell back, nor ever approached the throne of Hope, but continued still to gaze at a distance, and laughed at the slow progress of those whom they saw toiling in the *Strait of Difficulty*.

Part of the favourites of Fancy, when they had entered the garden, without making, like the rest, an attempt to climb the mountain, turned immediately to the vale of Idleness, a calm and undisturbed retirement, from whence they could always have Hope in prospect, and to which they pleased themselves with believing that she intended speedily to descend. These were indeed scorned by all the rest; but they seemed very little affected by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddess.

Among this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth: but turning round, I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of whom I knew to be Age, and the other Want. Sport and revelling were now at an end,

and an universal shriek of affright and distress burst out and awaked me.

No. 68. Saturday, November 10, 1750.

Vivendum recte, cum propter plurima, tunc his
Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima servi. Juv.

Let us live well: were it alone for this
The baneful tongues of servants to despise:
Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds
An easy entrance to ignoble minds. Hervey.

The younger Pliny has very justly observed, that of actions that deserve our attention, the most splendid are not always the greatest. Fame, and wonder, and applause, are not excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and separate from virtue and heroism. Eminence of station, greatness of effect, and all the favours of fortune, must concur to place excellence in public view; but fortitude, diligence, and patience, divested of their show, glide unobserved through the crowd of life, and suffer and act, though with the same vigour, and constancy, yet without pity and without praise.

This remark may be extended to all parts of life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effect upon common eyes and common ears. A thousand miseries make silent and invisible inroads on mankind, and the heart feels innumerable throbs, which never break into complaint. Perhaps, likewise, our pleasures are for the most part equally secret, and most are born up by some private satisfaction, some internal consciousness, some latent hope, some peculiar prospect, which they never communicate, but reserve for solitary hours, and clandestine meditation.

The main of life is, indeed, composed of small incidents and petty occurrences; of wishes for objects not remote, and grief for disappointments of no fatal consequence; of insect vexations which sting us and fly away, impertinences which buzz a while about us, and are heard no more; of meteorous pleasures which dance before us and are dissipated; of compliments which glide off the soul like other music, and are forgotten by him that gave and him that received them.

Such is the general heap out of which every man is to cull his own condition; for, as the chemists tell us, that all bodies

are resolvable into the same elements, and that the boundless variety of things arises from the different proportions of very few ingredients; so a few pains and a few pleasures are all the materials of human life, and of these the proportions are partly allotted by Providence, and partly left to the arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is for the most part happy or miserable. For very few are involved in great events, or have their thread of life entwisted with the chain of causes on which armies or nations are suspended; and even those who seem wholly busied in public affairs, and elevated above low cares, or trivial pleasures, pass the chief part of their time in familiar and domestic scenes; from these they came into public life, to these they are every hour recalled by passions not to be suppressed; in these they have the reward of their toils, and to these at last they retire.

The great end of prudence is to give cheerfulness to those hours which splendour cannot gild, and acclamation cannot exhilarate; those soft intervals of unbended amusement, in which a man shrinks to his natural dimensions, and throws aside the ornaments or disguises which he feels in privacy to be useless incumbrances, and to lose all effect when they become familiar. To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution.

It is, indeed, at home that every man must be known by those who would make a just estimate either of his virtue or felicity; for smiles and embroidery are alike occasional, and the mind is often dressed for show in painted honour and fictitious benevolence.

Every man must have found some whose lives, in every house but their own, were a continual series of hypocrisy, and who concealed under fair appearances bad qualities, which, whenever they thought themselves out of the reach of censure, broke out from their restraint, like winds imprisoned in their caverns, and whom every one had reason to love, but they whose love a wise man is chiefly solicitous to procure. And there are others who, without any show of general goodness, and without the attractions by which popularity is conciliated, are received among their own families as bestowers of happiness, and reverenced as instructors, guardians, and benefactors.

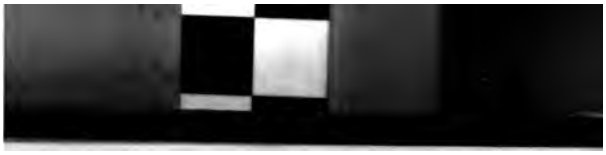
The most authentic witnesses of any man's character are those who know him in his own family, and see him without any restraint or rule of conduct, but such as he voluntarily prescribes to himself. If a man carries virtue with him into

his private apartments, and takes no advantage of unlimited power or probable secrecy; if we trace him through the round of his time, and find that his character, with those allowances which mortal frailty must always want, is uniform and regular, we have all the evidence of his sincerity, that one man can have with regard to another: and, indeed, as hypocrisy cannot be its own reward, we may, without hesitation, determine that his heart is pure.

The highest panegyric, therefore, that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants. For, however vanity or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice. Vice and virtue are easily distinguished. Oppression, according to Harrington's aphorism, will be felt by those who cannot see it; and, perhaps, it falls out very often that, in moral questions, the philosophers in the gown, and in the livery, differ not so much in their sentiments, as in their language, and have equal power of discerning right, though they cannot point it out to others with equal address.

There are very few faults to be committed in solitude, or without some agents, partners, confederates, or witnesses; and, therefore, the servant must commonly know the secrets of a master, who has any secrets to entrust; and failings, merely personal, are so frequently exposed by that security which pride and folly generally produce, and so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of condition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestic can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its impartiality may be sometimes suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship dictates palliations.

The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them may be justly considered as one motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable, than his who has put himself in the power of his servant; in the power of him, whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that authority thus acquired, is possessed without insolence, or that the master is not forced to confess, by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by some foolish confidence. And his crime is equally punished, whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is re-



duced: and he is from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, in perpetual dread of insolence and defamation; of a controller at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secured, and which, after a long course of submission, promises, and anxieties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or in a frolic of drunkenness.

To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the great prerogative of innocence; an exemption granted only to invariable virtue. But guilt has always its horrours and solicitudes: and, to make it yet more shameful and detestable, it is doomed often to stand in awe of those to whom nothing could give influence or weight but their power of betraying.

No. 69. Tuesday, November 13, 1750.

Flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,
Tyndaris; *et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit.*
Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas
Omnia destruitis: vitiataque dentibus ævi
Paulatim lenta consumitis omnia morte. Ovid.

The dreadful wrinkles when poor *Helen* spy'd,
Ah! why this second rape?—with tears she cry'd.
Time, thou devourer, and thou envious age,
Who all destroy with keen corroding rage,
Beneath your jaws, whate'er have pleas'd or please,
Must sink, consum'd by swift or slow degrees.
Elphinston.

An old Greek epigrammatist, intending to show the miseries that attend the last stage of man, imprecates upon those, who are so foolish as to wish for long life, the calamity of continuing to grow old from century to century. He thought that no adventitious or foreign pain was requisite; that decrepitude itself was an epitome of whatever was dreadful; and nothing could be added to the curse of age, but that it should be extended beyond its natural limits.

The most indifferent or negligent spectator can indeed scarcely retire, without heaviness of heart, from a view of the last scenes of the tragedy of life, in which he finds those who, in the former parts of the drama, were distinguished by opposition of conduct, contrariety of designs, and dissimilitude of personal qualities, all involved in one common distress, and all struggling with affliction which they cannot hope to overcome.

The other miseries, which waylay our passage through the world, wisdom may escape, and fortitude may conquer: by caution and circumspection we may steal along with very little to obstruct or incommode us; by spirit and vigour we may force a way, and reward the vexation of contest by the pleasures of victory. But a time must come when our policy and bravery shall be equally useless: when we shall all sink into helplessness and sadness, without any power of receiving solace from the pleasures that have formerly delighted us, or any prospect of emerging into a second possession of the blessings that we have lost.

The industry of man has, indeed, not been wanting in endeavours to procure comforts for these hours of dejection and melancholy, and to gild the dreadful gloom with artificial light. The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose chests are full, imagines himself always fortified against invasions on his authority. If he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he can at last alter his will; and, therefore, all that have hopes must likewise have fears, and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest.

This is, indeed, too frequently the citadel of the dotard, the last fortress to which age retires, and in which he makes the stand against the upstart race that seizes his domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his prescriptions. But here, though there may be safety, there is no pleasure; and what remains is but a proof that more was once possessed.

Nothing seems to have been more universally dreaded by the ancients than orbity, or want of children; and, indeed, to a man who has survived all the companions of his youth, all who have participated his pleasures and his cares, have been engaged in the same events, and filled their minds with the same conceptions, this full-peopled world is a dismal solitude. He stands forlorn and silent, neglected or insulted, in the midst of multitudes, animated with hopes which he cannot share, and employed in business which he is no longer able to forward or retard: nor can he find any to whom his life or his death are of importance, unless he has secured some domestic gratifications, some tender employments, and endeared himself to some whose interest and gratitude may unite them to him.

So different are the colours of life as we look forward to the future, or backward to the past; and so different the opinions and sentiments which this contrariety of appearance naturally produces, that the conversation of the old and

young ends generally with contempt or pity on either side. To a young man entering the world with fulness of hope, and ardour of pursuit, nothing is so unpleasing as the cold caution, the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidence, which experience and disappointments certainly infuse; and the old man wonders in his turn that the world never can grow wiser, that neither precepts, nor testimonies, can cure boys of their credulity and sufficiency; and that not one can be convinced that snares are lain for him, till he find himself entangled.

Thus one generation is always the scorn and wonder of the other, and the notions of the old and young are like liquors of different gravity and texture which never can unite. The spirits of youth sublimed by health, and volatilised by passion, soon leave behind them the phlegmatic sediment of weariness and deliberation, and burst out in temerity and enterprise. The tenderness, therefore, which nature infuses, and which long habits of beneficence confirm, is necessary to reconcile such opposition; and an old man must be a father to bear with patience those follies and absurdities which he will perpetually imagine himself to find in the schemes and expectations, the pleasures and the sorrows, of those who have not yet been hardened by time, and chilled by frustration.

Yet, it may be doubted, whether the pleasure of seeing children ripening into strength, be not overbalanced by the pain of seeing some fall in the blossom, and others blasted in their growth; some shaken down with storms, some tainted with cankers, and some shrivelled in the shade; and whether he that extends his care beyond himself, does not multiply his anxieties more than his pleasures, and weary himself to no purpose, by superintending what he cannot regulate.

But, though age be to every order of human beings sufficiently terrible, it is particularly to be dreaded by fine ladies, who have had no other end or ambition than to fill up the day and the night with dress, diversions, and flattery; and who, having made no acquaintance with knowledge, or with business, have constantly caught all their ideas from the current prattle of the hour, and been indebted for all their happiness to compliments and treats. With these ladies, age begins early, and very often lasts long; it begins when their beauty fades, when their mirth loses its sprightliness, and their motion its ease. From that time, all which gave them joy vanishes from about them: they hear the praises bestowed on others, which used to swell their bosoms with exultation. They visit the seats of felicity, and endeavour to continue the

habit of being delighted. But pleasure is only received when we believe that we give it in return. Neglect and petulance inform them that their power and their value are past; and what then remains but a tedious and comfortless uniformity of time, without any motion of the heart, or exercise of the reason?

Yet, however age may discourage us by its appearance from considering it in prospect, we shall all by degrees certainly be old; and therefore we ought to inquire what provision can be made against that time of distress? what happiness can be stored up against the winter of life? and how we may pass our latter years with serenity and cheerfulness?

If it has been found by the experience of mankind, that not even the best seasons of life are able to supply sufficient gratifications, without anticipating uncertain felicities, it cannot surely be supposed that old age, worn with labours, harassed with anxieties, and tortured with diseases, should have any gladness of its own, or feel any satisfaction from the contemplation of the present. All the comfort that can now be expected must be recalled from the past, or borrowed from the future: the past is very soon exhausted, all the events or actions of which the memory can afford pleasure are quickly recollected; and the future lies beyond the grave, where it can be reached only by virtue and devotion.

Piety is the only proper and adequate relief of decaying man. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into imbecility, and feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding upon him, falls into a gulph of bottomless misery, in which every reflection must plunge him deeper, and where he finds only new gradations of anguish, and precipices of horrour.

No. 70. Saturday, November 17, 1750.

——Argentea proles,
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære. Ovid.

Succeeding times a silver age beheld,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold. Dryden.

Hesiod, in his celebrated distribution of mankind, divides them into three orders of intellect. "The first place," says he, "belongs to him that can by his own powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him that is willing to hear

instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shown him by another; but he that has neither acuteness nor docility, who can neither find the way by himself, nor will be led by others, is a wretch without use or value."

If we survey the moral world, it will be found that the same division may be made of men, with regard to their virtue. There are some whose principles are so firmly fixed, whose conviction is so constantly present to their minds, and who have raised in themselves such ardent wishes for the approbation of God, and the happiness with which he has promised to reward obedience and perseverance, that they rise above all other cares and considerations, and uniformly examine every action and desire, by comparing it with the divine commands. There are others in a kind of equipoise between good and ill; who are moved on the one part by riches or pleasure, by the gratifications of passion and the delights of sense; and, on the other, by laws of which they own the obligation, and rewards of which they believe the reality, and whom a very small addition of weight turns either way. The third class consists of beings immersed in pleasure, or abandoned to passion, without any desire of higher good, or any effort to extend their thoughts beyond immediate and gross satisfactions.

The second class is so much the most numerous, that it may be considered as comprising the whole body of mankind. Those of the last are not very many, and those of the first are very few; and neither the one nor the other fall much under the consideration of the moralist, whose precepts are intended chiefly for those who are endeavouring to go forward up the steeps of virtue, not for those who have already reached the summit, or those who have resolved to stay for ever in their present situation.

To a man not versed in the living world, but accustomed to judge only by speculative reason, it is scarcely credible that any one should be in this state of indifference, or stand undetermined and unengaged, ready to follow the first call to either side. It seems certain, that either a man must believe that virtue will make him happy, and resolve therefore to be virtuous, or think that he may be happy without virtue, and therefore cast off all care but for his present interest. It seems impossible that conviction should be on one side, and practice on the other: and that he who has seen the right way should voluntarily shut his eyes, that he may quit it with more tranquillity. Yet all these absurdities are every hour to be found; the wisest and best men deviate from known and acknowledged duties, by inadvertency and surprise; or most are good no

longer than while temptation is away, than while their passions are without excitements, and their opinions are free from the counteraction of any other motive.

Among the sentiments which almost every man changes as he advances into years, is the expectation of uniformity of character. He that without acquaintance with the power of desire, the cogency of distress, the complications of affairs, or the force of partial influence, has filled his mind with the excellence of virtue, and, having never tried his resolution in any encounters with hope or fear, believes it able to stand firm whatever shall oppose it, will be always clamorous against the smallest failure, ready to exact the utmost punctualities of right, and to consider every man that fails in any part of his duty, as without conscience and without merit; unworthy of trust or love, of pity or regard; as an enemy whom all should join to drive out of society, as a pest which all should avoid, or as a weed which all should trample.

It is not but by experience, that we are taught the possibility of retaining some virtues, and rejecting others, or of being good to a particular degree. For it is very easy to the solitary reasoner, to prove that the same arguments by which the mind is fortified against one crime are of equal force against all, and the consequence very naturally follows, that he whom they fail to move on any occasion, has either never considered them, or has by some fallacy taught himself to evade their validity; and that, therefore, when a man is known to be guilty of one crime, no farther evidence is needful of his depravity and corruption.

Yet, such is the state of moral virtue, that it is always uncertain and variable, sometimes extending to the whole compass of duty, and sometimes shrinking into a narrow space, and fortifying only a few avenues of the heart, while all the rest is left open to incursions of appetite, or given up to the dominion of wickedness. Nothing therefore is more unjust than to judge of man by too short an acquaintance, and too slight inspection; for it often happens, that, in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipated, there is a secret radical worth, which may shoot out by proper cultivation; that the spark of heaven, though dimned and obstructed, is yet not extinguished, but may, by the breath of counsel and exhortation, be kindled into flame.

To imagine that every one who is not completely good is irrecoverably abandoned, is to suppose that all are capable of the same degrees of excellence; it is indeed to exact from all that perfection which none ever can attain. And since the purest virtue is consistent with some vice, and the virtue of

the greatest number with almost an equal proportion of contrary qualities, let none too hastily conclude, that all goodness is lost, though it may for a time be clouded and overwhelmed; for most minds are the slaves of external circumstances, and conform to any hand that undertakes to mould them, roll down any torrent of custom in which they happen to be caught, or bend to any importunity that bears hard against them.

It may be particularly observed of women, that they are for the most part good or bad, as they fall among those who practise vice or virtue; and that neither education nor reason gives them much security against the influence of example. Whether it be that they have less courage to stand against opposition, or that their desire of admiration makes them sacrifice their principles to the poor pleasure of worthless praise, it is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground against laughter, flattery, or fashion.

For this reason, every one should consider himself as entrusted, not only with his own conduct, but with that of others; and as accountable, not only for the duties which he neglects, or the crimes that he commits, but for that negligence and irregularity which he may encourage or inculcate. Every man, in whatever station, has, or endeavours to have, his followers, admirers, and imitators, and has therefore the influence of his example to watch with care; he ought to avoid not only crimes, but the appearance of crimes; and not only to practice virtue, but to applaud, countenance, and support it. For it is possible that for want of attention, we may teach others faults from which ourselves are free, or, by a cowardly desertion of a cause which we ourselves approve, may pervert those who fix their eyes upon us, and, having no rule of their own to guide their course, are easily misled by the aberrations of that example which they choose for their direction.

No. 71. Tuesday, November 20, 1750.

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis
Da veniam properat vivere nemo satis. Mart.

True, Sir, to live I haste, your pardon give,
For tell me, who makes haste enough to live? F. Lewis.

Many words and sentences are so frequently heard in the mouths of men, that a superficial observer is inclined to be-

lieve, that they must contain some primary principle, some great rule of action, which it is proper always to have present to the attention, and by which the use of every hour is to be adjusted. Yet, if we consider the conduct of those sententious philosophers, it will often be found that they repeat these aphorisms, merely because they have somewhere heard them, because they have nothing else to say, or because they think veneration gained by such appearances of wisdom, but that no ideas are annexed to the words, and that, according to the old blunder of the followers of Aristotle, their souls are mere pipes or organs, which transmit sounds, but do not understand them.

Of this kind is the well known and well attested position, that *life is short*, which may be heard among mankind by an attentive auditor, many times a day, but which never yet within my reach of observation left any impression upon the mind; and perhaps, if my readers will turn their thoughts back upon their old friends, they will find it difficult to call a single man to remembrance, who appeared to know that life was short till he was about to lose it.

It is observable that Horace, in his account of the characters of men, as they are diversified by the various influence of time, remarks, that the old man is *dilator, spe longus*, given to procrastination, and inclined to extend his hopes to a great distance. So far are we generally from thinking what we often say of the shortness of life, that at the time when it is necessarily shortest, we form projects which we delay to execute, indulge such expectations as nothing but a long train of events can gratify, and suffer those passions to gain upon us, which are only excusable in the prime of life.

These reflections were lately excited in my mind, by an evening's conversation with my friend Prospero, who, at the age of fifty-five, has bought an estate, and is now contriving to dispose and cultivate it with uncommon elegance. His great pleasure is to walk among stately trees, and lie musing in the heat of noon under their shade; he is therefore maturely considering how he shall dispose his walks and his groves, and has at last determined to send for the best plans from Italy, and forbear planting till the next season.

Thus is life trifled away in preparations to do what never can be done, if it be left unattempted till all the requisites which imagination can suggest are gathered together. Where our design terminates only in our own satisfaction, the mistake is of no great importance, for the pleasure of expecting enjoyment is often greater than that of obtaining it, and the completion of almost every wish is found a disappointment;

but when many others are interested in an undertaking, when any design is formed, in which the improvement or security of mankind is involved, nothing is more unworthy either of wisdom or benevolence, than to delay it from time to time, or to forget how much every day that passes over us takes away from our power, and how soon an idle purpose to do an action, sinks into a mournful wish that it had once been done.

We are frequently importuned, by the bacchanalian writers, to lay hold on the present hour, to catch the pleasures within our reach, and remember that futurity is not at our command.

Τὸ ῥόδον ἀκμάζει βαιὸν χρόνον ἢν δὲ παρέλθῃς,
Ζητῶν εὑρήσεις ῥόδον, ἀλλὰ βάτον.

Soon fades the rose; once past the fragrant hour,
The loiterer finds a bramble for a flow'r.

But surely these exhortations may, with equal propriety, be applied to better purposes; it may be at least inculcated that pleasures are more safely postponed than virtues, and that greater loss is suffered by missing an opportunity of doing good, than an hour of giddy frolic and noisy merriment.

When Baxter had lost a thousand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a school, he used frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of bestowing, and considered himself as culpable in some degree for having left a good action in the hands of chance, and suffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickness and diligence.

It is lamented by Hearne, the learned antiquary of Oxford, that this general forgetfulness of the fragility of life, has remarkably infected the students of monuments and records: as their employment consists first in collecting, and afterwards in arranging or abstracting what libraries afford them, they ought to amass no more than they can digest; but when they have undertaken a work, they go on searching and transcribing, call for new supplies, when they are already overburdened, and at last leave their work unfinished. "It is," says he, "the business of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him."

Thus, not only in the slumber of sloth, but in the dissipation of ill directed industry, is the shortness of life generally forgotten. As some men lose their hours in laziness, because

they suppose, that there is time enough for the reparation of neglect; others busy themselves in providing that no length of life may want employment; and it often happens, that sluggishness and activity are equally surprised by the last summons, and perish not more differently from each other, than the fowl that received the shot in her flight, from her that is killed upon the bush.

Among the many improvements made by the last centuries in human knowledge, may be numbered the exact calculations of the value of life; but whatever may be their use in traffic, they seem very little to have advanced morality. They have hitherto been rather applied to the acquisition of money, than of wisdom; the computer refers none of his calculations to his own tenure, but persists in contempt of probability, to foretel old age to himself, and believes that he is marked out to reach the utmost verge of human existence, and see thousands and ten thousands fall into the grave.

So deeply is this fallacy rooted in the heart, and so strongly guarded by hope and fear against the approach of reason, that neither science nor experience can shake it, and we act as if life were without end, though we see and confess its uncertainty and shortness.

Divines have, with great strength and ardour, shown the absurdity of delaying reformation and repentance; a degree of folly, indeed, which sets eternity to hazard. It is the same weakness, in proportion to the importance of the neglect, to transfer any care, which now claims our attention, to a future time; we subject ourselves to needless dangers from accidents which early diligence would have obviated, or perplex our minds by vain precautions, and make provision for the execution of designs, of which the opportunity once missed never will return.

As he that lives longest lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waste. The duties of life are commensurate to its duration, and every day brings its task, which if neglected is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away those months and years, in which he should have laboured, must remember that he has now only a part of that of which the whole is little: and that since the few moments remaining are to be considered as the last trust of heaven, not one is to be lost.

No. 72. Saturday, November 24, 1750.

Omnis Aristippum *decuit status, et color, et res,*
Tentantem majora, fere presentibus æquum. Hor.

Yet *Aristippus* ev'ry dress became,
In ev'ry various change of life the same;
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,
Yet to the present held an equal mind. Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Those who exalt themselves into the chair of instruction, without inquiring whether any will submit to their authority, have not sufficiently considered how much of human life passes in little incidents, cursory conversations, slight business, and casual amusements; and therefore they have endeavoured only to inculcate the more awful virtues, without condescending to regard those pretty qualities, which grow important only by their frequency, and which though they produce no single acts of heroism, nor astonish us by great events, yet are every moment exerting their influence upon us, and make the draught of life sweet or bitter by imperceptible instillations. They operate unseen and unregarded, as change of air makes us sick or healthy, though we breathe it without attention, and only know the particles that impregnate it by their salutary or malignant effects.

You have shown yourself not ignorant of the value of those subaltern endowments, yet have hitherto neglected to recommend good-humour to the world, though a little reflection will show you that it is the *balm of being*, the quality to which all that adorns or elevates mankind must owe its power of pleasing. Without good-humour, learning and bravery can only confer that superiority which swells the heart of the lion in the desert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without resistance. Without good-humour, virtue may awe by its dignity, and amaze by its brightness; but must always be viewed at a distance, and will scarcely gain a friend or attract an imitator.

Good-humour may be defined a habit of being pleased; a constant and perennial softness of manner, easiness of approach, and suavity of disposition: like that which every man perceives in himself, when the first transports of new felicity have subsided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a slow succession of soft impulses. Good-humour is

a state between gaiety and unconcern; the act or emanation of a mind at leisure to regard the gratification of another.

It is imagined by many, that whenever they aspire to please, they are required to be merry, and to show the gladness of their souls by flights of pleasantry, and bursts of laughter. But though these men may be for a time heard with applause and admiration, they seldom delight us long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to easiness and good-humour, as the eye gazes a while on eminences glittering with the sun, but soon turns aching away to verdure and to flowers.

Gaiety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance; the one overpowers weak spirits, and the other recreates and revives them. Gaiety seldom fails to give some pain; the hearers either strain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or are left behind in envy and despair. Good-humour boasts no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleases principally by not offending.

It is well known that the most certain way to give any man pleasure is to persuade him that you receive pleasure from him, to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any such appearance of superiority as may overbear and depress him. We see many that by this art only spend their days in the midst of caresses, invitations, and civilities; and without any extraordinary qualities or attainments, are the universal favourites of both sexes, and certainly find a friend in every place. The darlings of the world will, indeed, be generally found such as excite neither jealousy nor fear, and are not considered as candidates for any eminent degree of reputation, but content themselves with common accomplishments, and endeavour rather to solicit kindness than to raise esteem; therefore in assemblies and places of resort, it seldom fails to happen, that though at the entrance of some particular person, every face brightens with gladness, and every hand is extended in salutation, yet if you pursue him beyond the first exchange of civilities, you will find him of very small importance, and only welcome to the company, as one by whom all conceive themselves admired, and with whom any one is at liberty to amuse himself when he can find no other auditor or companion; as one with whom all are at ease, who will hear a jest without criticism and a narrative without contradiction, who laughs with every wit, and yields to every disputer.

There are many whose vanity always inclines them to associate with those from whom they have no reason to fear

mortification; and there are times in which the wise and the knowing are willing to receive praise without the labour of deserving it, in which the most elevated mind is willing to descend, and the most active to be at rest. All therefore are at some hour or another fond of companions whom they can entertain upon easy terms, and who will relieve them from solitude, without condemning them to vigilance and caution. We are most inclined to love when we have nothing to fear, and he that encourages us to please ourselves, will not be long without preference in our affection to those whose learning holds us at the distance of pupils, or whose wit calls all attention from us, and leaves us without importance and without regard.

It is remarked by prince Henry, when he sees Falstaff lying on the ground, that *he could have better spared a better man.* He was well acquainted with the vices and follies of him whom he lamented; but while his conviction compelled him to do justice to superior qualities, his tenderness still broke out at the remembrance of Falstaff, of the cheerful companion, the loud buffoon, with whom he had passed his time in all the luxury of idleness, who had gladded him with unenvied merriment, and whom he could at once enjoy and despise.

You may perhaps think this account of those who are distinguished for their good-humour, not very consistent with the praises which I have bestowed upon it. But surely nothing can more evidently show the value of this quality, than that it recommends those who are destitute of all other excellencies, and procures regard to the trifling, friendship to the worthless, and affection to the dull.

Good-humour is indeed generally degraded by the characters in which it is found; for, being considered as a cheap and vulgar quality, we find it often neglected by those that, having excellencies of higher reputation and brighter splendour, perhaps imagine that they have some right to gratify themselves at the expense of others, and are to demand compliance rather than to practise it. It is by some unfortunate mistake that almost all those who have any claim to esteem or love, press their pretensions with too little consideration of others. This mistake, my own interest, as well as my zeal for general happiness, makes me desirous to rectify; for I have a friend, who, because he knows his own fidelity and usefulness, is never willing to sink into a companion: I have a wife whose beauty first subdued me, and whose wit confirmed her conquest, but whose beauty now serves no other pur-

pose than to entitle her to tyranny, and whose wit is only used to justify perverseness.

Surely nothing can be more unreasonable than to lose the will to please, when we are conscious of the power, or show more cruelty than to choose any kind of influence before that of kindness. He that regards the welfare of others, should make his virtue approachable, that it may be loved and copied; and he that considers the wants which every man feels, or will feel, of external assistance, must rather wish to be surrounded by those that love him, than by those that admire his excellencies, or solicit his favours; for admiration ceases with novelty, and interest gains its end and retires. A man whose great qualities want the ornament of superficial attractions, is like a naked mountain with mines of gold, which will be frequented only till the treasure is exhausted.

I am, &c.

PHILOMIDES.

No. 73. TUESDAY, November 27, 1750.

Stulte, quid O frustra votis puerilibus optas
Quæ non ulla tulit, ferive, feretve dies.

Why thinks the fool with childish hope to see
What neither is, nor was, nor e'er shall be? ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—If you feel any of that compassion which you recommend to others, you will not disregard a case which I have reason from observation to believe very common, and which I know by experience to be very miserable. And though the querulous are seldom received with great ardour of kindness, I hope to escape the mortification of finding that my lamentations spread the contagion of impatience, and produce anger rather than tenderness. I write not merely to vent the swelling of my heart, but to inquire by what means I may recover my tranquillity; and shall endeavour at brevity in my narrative, having long known that complaint quickly tires, however elegant, or however just.

I was born in a remote country, of a family that boasts alliances with the greatest names in English history, and extends its claims of affinity to the Tudors and Plantagenets. My ancestors by little and little wasted their patrimony, till

my father had not enough left for the support of a family, without descending to the cultivation of his own grounds, being condemned to pay three sisters the fortunes allotted them by my grandfather, who is suspected to have made his will when he was incapable of adjusting properly the claims of his children, and who, perhaps without design, enriched his daughters by beggaring his son. My aunts being, at the death of their father, neither young nor beautiful, nor very eminent for softness of behaviour, were suffered to live unsolicited, and by accumulating the interest of their portions, grew every day richer and prouder. My father pleased himself with foreseeing that the possessions of those ladies must revert at last to the hereditary estate, and that his family might lose none of its dignity, resolved to keep me untainted with a lucrative employment: whenever therefore I discovered any inclination to the improvement of my condition, my mother never failed to put me in mind of my birth, and charged me to do nothing with which I might be reproached when I should come to my aunt's estate.

In all the perplexities or vexations which want of money brought upon us, it was our constant practice to have recourse to futurity. If any of our neighbours surpassed us in appearance, we went home and contrived an equipage, with which the death of my aunts was to supply us. If any purse-proud upstart was deficient in respect, vengeance was referred to the time in which our estate was to be repaired. We registered every act of civility and rudeness, inquired the number of dishes at every feast, and minuted the furniture of every house, that we might, when the hour of affluence should come, be able to eclipse all their splendour, and surpass all their magnificence.

Upon plans of elegance, and schemes of pleasure, the day rose and set, and the year went round unregarded, while we were busied in laying out plantations on ground not yet our own, and deliberating whether the manor-house should be rebuilt or repaired. This was the amusement of our leisure, and the solace of our exigencies; we met together only to contrive how our approaching fortune should be enjoyed; for in this our conversation always ended, on whatever subject it began. We had none of the collateral interests, which diversify the life of others with joys and hopes, but had turned our whole attention on one event, which we could neither hasten nor retard, and had no other object of curiosity than the health or sickness of my aunts, of which we were careful to procure very exact and early intelligence.

This visionary opulence for a while soothed our imagination, but afterwards fired our wishes, and exasperated our necessities, and my father could not always restrain himself from exclaiming, that *no creature had so many lives as a cat and an old maid.* At last, upon the recovery of his sister from an ague, which she was supposed to have caught by sparing fire, he began to lose his stomach, and four months afterwards sunk into the grave.

My mother, who loved her husband, survived him but a little while, and left me the sole heir of their lands, their schemes, and their wishes. As I had not enlarged my conceptions either by books or conversation, I differed only from my father by the freshness of my cheeks, and the vigour of my step; and, like him, gave way to no thought but of enjoying the wealth which my aunts were hoarding.

At length the eldest fell ill. I paid the civilities and compliments which sickness requires with the utmost punctuality. I dreamed every night of escutcheons and white gloves, and inquired every morning at an early hour whether there were any news of my dear aunt. At last a messenger was sent to inform me that I must come to her without the delay of a moment. I went and heard her last advice, but opening her will, found that she had left her fortune to her second sister.

I hung my head; the youngest sister threatened to be married, and every thing was diappointment and discontent. I was in danger of losing irreparably one-third of my hopes, and was condemned still to wait for the rest. Of part of my terrour I was soon eased; for the youth, whom his relations would have compelled to marry the old lady, after innumerable stipulations, articles, and settlements, ran away with the daughter of his father's groom; and my aunt, upon this conviction of the perfidy of man, resolved never to listen more to amorous addresses.

Ten years longer I dragged the shackles of expectation, without suffering a day to pass, in which I did not compute how much my chance was improved of being rich to-morrow. At last the second lady died, after a short illness, which yet was long enough to afford her time for the disposal of her estate, which she gave me after the death of her sister.

I was now relieved from part of my misery; a large fortune, though not in my power, was certain and unalienable; nor was there now any danger, that I might at last be frustrated of my hopes by a fret of dotage, the flatteries of a chambermaid, the whispers of a tale-bearer, or the officiousness of a nurse. But my wealth was yet in reversion, my aunt was to be buried before I could emerge to grandeur and

pleasure; and there were yet, according to my father's observation, nine lives between me and happiness.

I however lived on, without any clamours of discontent, and comforted myself with considering, that all are mortal, and they who are continually decaying must at last be destroyed.

But let no man from this time suffer his felicity to depend on the death of his aunt. The good gentlewoman was very regular in her hours, and simple in her diet; and in walking or sitting still, waking or sleeping, had always in view the preservation of her health. She was subject to no disorder but hypochondriac dejection; by which, without intention, she increased my miseries, for whenever the weather was cloudy, she would take her bed and send me notice that her time was come. I went with all the haste of eagerness, and sometimes received passionate injunctions to be kind to her maid, and directions how the last offices should be performed; but if before my arrival the sun happened to break out, or the wind to change, I met her at the door, or found her in the garden, bustling and vigilant, with all the tokens of long life.

Sometimes, however, she fell into distempers, and was thrice given over by the doctor, yet she found means of slipping through the gripe of death, and after having tortured me three months at each time with violent alternations of hope and fear, came out of her chamber without any other hurt than the loss of flesh, which in a few weeks she recovered by broths and jellies.

As most have sagacity sufficient to guess at the desires of an heir, it was the constant practice of those who were hoping at second hand, and endeavoured to secure my favour against the time I should be rich, to pay their court, by informing me that my aunt began to droop, that she had lately a bad night, that she coughed feebly, and that she could never climb May hill; or, at least, that the autumn would carry her off. Thus was I flattered in the winter with the piercing winds of March, and in summer, with the fogs of September. But she lived through spring and fall, and set heat and cold at defiance, till, after near half a century, I buried her on the fourteenth day of last June, aged ninety-three years, five months, and six days.

For two months after her death I was rich, and was pleased with that obsequiousness and reverence which wealth instantaneously procures. But this joy is now past, and I have returned again to my old habit of wishing. Being accustomed to give the future full power over my mind, and to start away

from the scene before me to some expected enjoyment. I deliver up myself to the tyranny of every desire which fancy suggests, and long for a thousand things which I am unable to procure. Money has much less power than is ascribed to it by those that want it. I had formed schemes which I cannot execute, I had supposed events which do not come to pass, and the rest of my life must pass in craving solicitude, unless you can find some remedy for a mind, corrupted with an inveterate disease of wishing, and unable to think on any thing but wants, which reason tells me never will be supplied.

I am, &c.

CUPIDUS.

No. 74. SATURDAY, December 1, 1750.

Rixatur de lanâ sæpe caprina. HOR.

For nought tormented, she for nought torments. ELPHINSTON.

MEN seldom give pleasure, where they are not pleased themselves; it is necessary, therefore, to cultivate an habitual alacrity and cheerfulness, that in whatever state we may be placed by Providence, whether we are appointed to confer or receive benefits, to implore or to afford protection, we may secure the love of those with whom we transact. For though it is generally imagined, that he who grants favours, may spare any attention to his behaviour, and that usefulness will always procure friends; yet it has been found, that there is an art of granting requests, an art very difficult of attainment; that officiousness and liberality may be so adulterated, as to lose the greater part of their effect; that compliance may provoke, relief may harass, and liberality distress.

No disease of the mind can more fatally disable it from benevolence, the chief duty of social beings, than ill humour or peevishness: for though it breaks not out in paroxysms of outrage, nor bursts into clamour, turbulence and bloodshed, it wears out happiness by slow corrosion, and small injuries incessantly repeated. It may be considered as the canker of life, that destroys its vigour, and checks its improvement, that creeps on with hourly depredations, and taints and vitiates what it cannot consume.

Peevishness, when it has been so far indulged, as to outrun the motions of the will, and discover itself without premeditation, is a species of depravity in the highest degree

disgusting and offensive, because no rectitude of intention, nor softness of address, can ensure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity. While we are courting the favour of a peevish man, and exerting ourselves in the most diligent civility, an unlucky syllable displeases, an unheeded circumstance ruffles and exasperates; and in the moment when we congratulate ourselves upon having gained a friend, our endeavours are frustrated at once, and all our assiduity forgotten in the casual tumult of some trifling irritation.

This troublesome impatience is sometimes nothing more than the sympton of some deeper malady. He that is angry without daring to confess his resentment, or sorrowful without the liberty of telling his grief, is too frequently inclined to give vent to the fermentations of his mind at the first passages that are opened, and to let his passions boil over upon those whom accident throws in his way. A painful and tedious course of sickness frequently produces such an alarming apprehension of the least increase of uneasiness, as keeps the soul perpetually on the watch, such a restless and incessant solicitude, as no care or tenderness can appease, and can only be pacified by the cure of the distemper, and the removal of that pain by which it is excited.

Nearly approaching to this weakness, is the captiousness of old age. When the strength is crushed, the senses dulled, and the common pleasures of life become insipid by repetition, we are willing to impute our uneasiness to causes not wholly out of our power, and please ourselves with fancying that we suffer by neglect, unkindness, or any evil which admits a remedy, rather than by the decays of nature, which cannot be prevented or repaired. We therefore revenge our pains upon those on whom we resolve to charge them; and too often drive mankind away at the time we have the greatest need of tenderness and assistance.

But though peevishness may sometimes claim our compassion, as the consequence or concomitant of misery, it is very often found, where nothing can justify or excuse its admission. It is frequently one of the attendants on the prosperous, and is employed by insolence in exacting homage, or by tyranny in harassing subjection. It is the offspring of idleness or pride: of idleness anxious for trifles: or pride unwilling to endure the least obstruction of her wishes. Those who have long lived in solitude indeed naturally contract this unsocial quality, because, having long had only themselves to please, they do not readily depart from their own inclinations: their singularities therefore are only blamable, when they have imprudently or morosely withdrawn themselves from the world:

but there are others, who have, without any necessity, nursed up this habit in their minds, by making implicit submissiveness the condition of their favour, and suffering none to approach them, but those who never speak but to applaud, or move but to obey.

He that gives himself up to his own fancy, and converses with none but such as he hires to lull him on the down of absolute authority, to sooth him with obsequiousness, and regale him with flattery, soon grows too slothful for the labour of contest, too tender for the asperity of contradiction, and too delicate for the coarseness of truth: a little opposition offends, a little restraint enrages, and a little difficulty perplexes him; having been accustomed to see every thing give way to his humour, he soon forgets his own littleness, and expects to find the world rolling at his beck, and all mankind employed to accommodate and delight him.

Tetrica had a large fortune bequeathed to her by an aunt, which made her very early independent, and placed her in a state of superiority to all about her. Having no superfluity of understanding, she was soon intoxicated by the flatteries of her maid, who informed her that ladies, such as she, had nothing to do but take pleasure their own way; that she wanted nothing from others, and had therefore no reason to value their opinion: that money was every thing; and that they who thought themselves ill-treated, should look for better usage among their equals.

Warm with these generous sentiments, Tetrica came forth into the world, in which she endeavoured to force respect by haughtiness of mien and vehemence of language; but having neither birth, beauty, nor wit, in any uncommon degree, she suffered such mortifications from those who thought themselves at liberty to return her insults, as reduced her turbulence to cooler malignity, and taught her to practise her arts of vexation only where she might hope to tyrannize without resistance. She continued from her twentieth to her fifty-fifth year to torment all her inferiors with so much diligence, that she has formed a principle of disapprobation, and finds in every place something to grate her mind, and disturb her quiet.

If she takes the air, she is offended with the heat or cold, the glare of the sun, or the gloom of the clouds: if she makes a visit, the room in which she is to be received, is too light, or too dark, or furnished with something which she cannot see without aversion. Her tea is never of the right sort; the figures on the China give her disgust. Where there are children, she hates the gabble of brats; where there are none, she cannot bear a place without some cheerfulness and rattle.

If many servants are kept in a house, she never fails to tell how Lord Lavish was ruined by a numerous retinue; if few, she relates the story of a miser that made his company wait on themselves. She quarrelled with one family, because she had an unpleasant view from their windows; with another, because the squirrel leaped within two yards of her: and with a third, because she could not bear the noise of the parrot.

Of milliners and mantua-makers she is the proverbial torment. She compels them to alter their work, then to unmake it, and contrive it after another fashion; then changes her mind and likes it better as it was at first; then will have a small improvement. Thus she proceeds till no profit can recompense the vexation; they at last leave the clothes at her house, and refuse to serve her. Her maid, the only being that can endure her tyranny, professes to take her own course, and hear her mistress talk. Such is the consequence of peevishness: it can be born only when it is despised.

It sometimes happens that too close an attention to minute exactness, or a too rigorous habit of examining every thing by the standard of perfection, vitiates the temper, rather than improves the understanding, and teaches the mind to discern faults with unhappy penetration. It is incident likewise to men of vigorous imagination to please themselves too much with futurities, and to fret because those expectations are disappointed, which should never have been formed. Knowledge and genius are often enemies to quiet, by suggesting ideas of excellence, which men and the performances of men cannot attain. But let no man rashly determine, that his unwillingness to be pleased is a proof of understanding, unless his superiority appears from less doubtful evidence; for though peevishness may sometimes justly boast its descent from learning or from wit, it is much oftener of base extraction, the child of vanity, and nursling of ignorance.

No. 75. Tuesday, December 4, 1750.

Diligitur nemo, nisi cui Fortuna secunda est,
Quæ, simul intonuit, proxima quæque fugat. Ovid.

When smiling Fortune spreads her golden ray,
All crowd around to flatter and obey:
But when she thunders from an angry sky,
Our friends, our flatterers, our lovers fly. Miss A. W.*

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—The diligence with which you endeavour to cultivate the knowledge of nature, manners, and life, will perhaps incline you to pay some regard to the observations of one who has been taught to know mankind by unwelcome information, and whose opinions are the result, not of solitary conjectures, but of practice and experience.

I was born to a large fortune, and bred to the knowledge of those arts which are supposed to accomplish the mind, and adorn the person of a woman. To these attainments, which custom and education almost forced upon me, I added some voluntary acquisitions by the use of books, and the conversation of that species of men whom the ladies generally mention with terrour and aversion under the name of scholars, but whom I have found a harmless and inoffensive order of beings, not so much wiser than ourselves, but that they may receive as well as communicate knowledge, and more inclined to degrade their own character by cowardly submission, than to overbear or oppress us with their learning or their wit.

From these men, however, if they are by kind treatment encouraged to talk, something may be gained, which, embellished with elegancy, and softened by modesty, will always add dignity and value to female conversation: and from my acquaintance with the bookish part of the world, I derived many principles of judgment and maxims of prudence, by which I was enabled to draw upon myself the general regard in every place of concourse or pleasure. My opinion was the great rule of approbation, my remarks were remembered by those who desired the second degree of fame, my mien was studied, my dress was imitated, my letters were handed from

* Anna Williams, of whom an account is given in the life of Dr. Johnson, prefixed to this edition. C.

one family to another, and read by those who copied them as sent to themselves; my visits were solicited as honours, and multitudes boasted of an intimacy with Melissa, who had only seen me by accident, and whose familiarity had never proceeded beyond the exchange of a compliment, or return of a courtesy.

I shall make no scruple of confessing, that I was pleased with this universal veneration, because I always considered it as paid to my intrinsic qualities and inseparable merit, and very easily persuaded myself that fortune had no part in my superiority. When I looked upon my glass, I saw youth and beauty, with health that might give me reason to hope their continuance; when I examined my mind, I found some strength of judgment, and fertility of fancy: and was told that every action was grace, and that every accent was persuasion.

In this manner my life passed like a continual triumph, amidst acclamations, and envy, and courtship, and caresses: to please Melissa was the general ambition, and every stratagem of artful flattery was practised upon me. To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praises are not believed by those who pronounce them: for they prove, at least, our power, and show that our favour is valued, since it is purchased by the meanness of falsehood. But, perhaps, the flatterer is not often detected, for an honest mind is not apt to suspect, and no one exerts the power of discernment with much vigour when self-love favours the deceit.

The number of adorers, and the perpetual distraction of my thoughts by new schemes of pleasure, prevented me from listening to any of those who crowd in multitudes to give girls advice, and keep me unmarried and unengaged to my twenty-seventh year, when, as I was towering in all the pride of uncontested excellency, with a face yet little impaired, and a mind hourly improving, the failure of a fund, in which my money was placed, reduced me to a frugal competency, which allowed little beyond neatness and independence.

I bore the diminution of my riches without any outrages of sorrow, or pusillanimity of dejection. Indeed I did not know how much I had lost, for, having always heard and thought more of my wit and beauty, than of my fortune, it did not suddenly enter my imagination that Melissa could sink beneath her established rank, while her form and her mind continued the same; that she could cease to raise admiration but by ceasing to deserve it, or feel any stroke but from the hand of time.

It was in my power to have concealed the loss, and to have married, by continuing the same appearance, with all the credit of my original fortune: but I was not so far sunk in my own esteem, as to submit to the baseness of fraud, or to desire any other recommendation than sense and virtue. I therefore dismissed my equipage, sold those ornaments which were become unsuitable to my new condition, and appeared among those with whom I used to converse with less glitter, but with equal spirit.

I found myself received at every visit, with sorrow beyond what is naturally felt for calamities in which we have no part, and was entertained with condolence and consolation so frequently repeated, that my friends plainly consulted rather their own gratification, than my relief. Some from that time refused my acquaintance, and forbore, without any provocation, to repay my visits; some visited me, but after a longer interval than usual, and every return was still with more delay: nor did any of my female acquaintances fail to introduce the mention of my misfortunes, to compare my present and former condition, to tell me how much it must trouble me to want the splendour which I became so well, to look at pleasures which I had formerly enjoyed, and to sink to a level with those by whom I had been considered as moving in a higher sphere, and who had hitherto approached me with reverence and submission, which I was now no longer to expect.

Observations like these, are commonly nothing better than covert insults, which serve to give vent to the flatulence of pride, but they are now and then imprudently uttered by honesty and benevolence, and inflict pain where kindness is intended: I will, therefore, so far maintain my antiquated claim to politeness, as to venture the establishment of this rule, that no one ought to remind another of misfortunes of which the sufferer does not complain, and which there are no means proposed of alleviating. You have no right to excite thoughts which necessarily give pain whenever they return, and which perhaps might not have revived but by absurd and unseasonable compassion.

My endless train of lovers immediately withdrew without raising any emotions. The greater part had indeed always professed to court, as it is termed, upon the square, had inquired my fortune, and offered settlements; these had undoubtedly a right to retire without censure, since they had openly treated for money, as necessary to their happiness, and who can tell how little they wanted any other portion? I have always thought the clamours of women unreasonable, who

imagine themselves injured, because the men who follow them upon the supposition of a greater fortune, reject them when they are discovered to have less. I have never known any lady, who did not think wealth a title to some stipulations in her favour: and surely what is claimed by the possession of money is justly forfeited by its loss. She that has once demanded a settlement, has allowed the importance of fortune; and when she cannot show pecuniary merit, why should she think her cheapener obliged to purchase?

My lovers were not all contented with silent desertion. Some of them revenged the neglect which they had formerly endured by wanton and superfluous insults, and endeavoured to mortify me, by paying, in my presence, those civilities to other ladies, which were once devoted only to me. But, as it has been my rule to treat men according to the rank of their intellect, I had never suffered any one to waste his life in suspense, who could have employed it to better purpose, and had therefore no enemies but coxcombs, whose resentment and respect were equally below my consideration.

The only pain which I have felt from degradation, is the loss of that influence which I had always exerted on the side of virtue, in the defence of innocence, and the assertion of truth. I now find my opinions slighted, my sentiments criticised, and my arguments opposed by those that used to listen to me without reply, and struggle to be first in expressing their conviction.

The female disputants have wholly thrown off my authority; and if I endeavour to enforce my reasons by an appeal to the scholars that happen to be present, the wretches are certain to pay their court by sacrificing me and my system to a finer gown; and I am every hour insulted with contradiction by cowards, who could never find till lately that Melissa was liable to errour.

There are two persons only whom I cannot charge with having changed their conduct with my change of fortune. One is an old curate that has passed his life in the duties of his profession, with great reputation for his knowledge and piety; the other is a lieutenant of dragoons. The parson made no difficulty in the height of my elevation to check me when I was pert, and instruct me when I blundered; and if there is any alteration, he is now more timorous lest his freedom should be thought rudeness. The soldier never paid me any particular addresses, but very rigidly observed all the rules of politeness, which he is now so far from relaxing, that whenever he serves the tea, he obstinately carries me the

first dish, in defiance of the frowns and whispers of the table.

This, Mr. Rambler, is *to see the world*. It is impossible for those that have only known affluence and prosperity, to judge rightly of themselves or others. The rich and the powerful live in a perpetual masquerade, in which all about them wear borrowed characters; and we only discover in what estimation we are held, when we can no longer give hopes or fears.

I am, &c.
MELISSA.

No. 76. SATURDAY, December 8, 1750.

——Silvis ubi passim
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,
Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit, unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus. HOR.

While mazy errour draws mankind astray
From truth's sure path, each takes his devious way;
One to the right, one to the left recedes,
Alike deluded, as each fancy leads. ELPHINSTON.

IT is easy for every man, whatever be his character with others, to find reasons for esteeming himself, and therefore censure, contempt, or conviction of crimes, seldom deprive him of his own favour. Those, indeed, who can see only external facts, may look upon him with abhorrence; but when he calls himself to his own tribunal, he finds every fault, if not absolutely effaced, yet so much palliated by the goodness of his intention, and the cogency of the motive, that very little guilt or turpitude remains; and when he takes a survey of the whole complication of his character, he discovers so many latent excellencies, so many virtues that want but an opportunity to exert themselves in act, and so many kind wishes for universal happiness, that he looks on himself as suffering unjustly under the infamy of single failings, while the general temper of his mind is unknown or unregarded.

It is natural to mean well, when only abstracted ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, and no particular passion turns us aside from rectitude: and so willing is every man to flatter himself, that the difference between approving laws, and obeying them, is frequently forgotten; he that acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleases his vanity with enforcing them to others, concludes himself zealous in the

cause of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than they conform to his own desires; and counts himself among her warmest lovers, because he praises her beauty, though every rival steals away his heart.

There are, however, great numbers who have little recourse to the refinements of speculation, but who yet live at peace with themselves, by means which require less understanding, or less attention. When their hearts are burthened with the consciousness of a crime, instead of seeking for some remedy within themselves, they look round upon the rest of mankind, to find others tainted with the same guilt; they please themselves with observing, that they have numbers on their side: and that, though they are hunted out from the society of good men, they are not likely to be condemned to solitude.

It may be observed, perhaps without exception, that none are so industrious to detect wickedness, or so ready to impute it, as they whose crimes are apparent and confessed. They envy an unblemished reputation, and what they envy they are busy to destroy; they are unwilling to suppose themselves meaner and more corrupt than others, and therefore willingly pull down from their elevations those with whom they cannot rise to an equality. No man yet was ever wicked without secret discontent, and according to the different degrees of remaining virtue, or unextinguished reason, he either endeavours to reform himself, or corrupt others; either to regain the station which he has quitted, or prevail on others to imitate his defection.

It has always been considered as an alleviation of misery not to suffer alone, even when union and society can contribute nothing to resistance or escape; some comfort of the same kind seems to incite wickedness to seek associates though indeed another reason may be given, for as guilt is propagated the power of reproach is diminished, and among numbers equally detestable every individual may be sheltered from shame, though not from conscience.

Another lenitive by which the throbs of the breast are assuaged, is the contemplation, not of the same, but of different crimes. He that cannot justify himself by his resemblance to others, is ready to try some other expedient, and to inquire what will rise to his advantage from opposition and dissimilitude. He easily finds some faults in every human being, which he weighs against his own, and easily makes them preponderate while he keeps the balance in his own hand, and throws in or takes out at his pleasure circumstances that make them heavier or lighter. He then triumphs in his comparative purity, and sets himself at ease, not because he

can refute the charges advanced against him, but because he can censure his accusers with equal justice, and no longer fears the arrows of reproach, when he has stored his magazine of malice with weapons equally sharp and equally envenomed.

This practice, though never just, is yet specious and artful, when the censure is directed against deviations to the contrary extreme. The man who is branded with cowardice, may, with some appearance of propriety, turn all his force of argument against a stupid contempt of life, and rash precipitation into unnecessary danger. Every recession from temerity is an approach towards cowardice; and though it be confessed that bravery, like other virtues, stands between faults on either hand, yet the place of the middle point may always be disputed: he may therefore often impose upon careless understandings, by turning the attention wholly from himself, and keeping it fixed invariably on the opposite fault: and by showing how many evils are avoided by his behaviour, he may conceal for a time those which are incurred.

But vice has not always opportunities or address for such artful subterfuges; men often extenuate their own guilt, only by vague and general charges upon others, or endeavour to gain rest to themselves, by pointing some other prey to the pursuit of censure.

Every whisper of infamy is industriously circulated, every hint of suspicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully published, by those whose interest it is, that the eye and voice of the public should be employed on any rather than on themselves.

All these artifices, and a thousand others equally vain and equally despicable, are incited by that conviction of the deformity of wickedness, from which none can set himself free, and by an absurd desire to separate the cause from the effects, and to enjoy the profit of crimes without suffering the shame. Men are willing to try all methods of reconciling guilt and quiet, and when their understandings are stubborn and uncomplying, raise their passions against them, and hope to overpower their own knowledge.

It is generally not so much the desire of men, sunk into depravity, to deceive the world as themselves, for when no particular circumstances make them dependent on others, infamy disturbs them little, but as it revives their remorse, and is echoed to them from their own hearts. The sentence most dreaded is that of reason and conscience, which they would engage on their side at any price but the labours of

duty, and the sorrows of repentance. For this purpose every seducement and fallacy is sought, the hopes still rest upon some new experiment till life is at an end: and the last hour steals on unperceived, while the faculties are engaged in resisting reason, and repressing the sense of the Divine disapprobation.

No. 77. Tuesday, December 11, 1750.

Os dignum æterno nitidum quod fulgeat auro,
Si mallet laudare Deum, cui sordida monstra
Prætulit, et liquidam temeravit crimine vocem. Prudent.

A golden statue such a wit might claim,
Had God and virtue rais'd the noble flame:
But ah! how lewd a subject has he sung!
What vile obscenity profanes his tongue! F. Lewis.

Among those whose hopes of distinction, or riches, arise from an opinion of their intellectual attainments, it has been, from age to age, an established custom to complain of the ingratitude of mankind to their instructors, and the discouragement which men of genius and study suffer from avarice and ignorance, from the prevalence of false taste, and the encouragement of barbarity.

Men are most powerfully affected by those evils which themselves feel, or which appear before their own eyes; and as there has never been a time of such general felicity, but that many have failed to obtain the rewards to which they had, in their own judgment, a just claim, some offended writer has always declaimed, in the rage of disappointment, against his age or nation; nor is there one who has not fallen upon times more unfavourable to learning than any former century, or who does not wish, that he had been reserved in the insensibility of non-existence to some happier hour, when literal merit shall no longer be despised, and the gifts and caresses of mankind shall recompense the toils of study, and add lustre to the charms of wit.

Many of these clamours are undoubtedly to be considered only as the bursts of pride never to be satisfied, as the prattle of affectation mimicking distresses unfelt, or as the commonplaces of vanity solicitous for splendour of sentences, and acuteness of remark. Yet it cannot be denied that frequent discontent must proceed from frequent hardships; and though it is evident, that not more than one age or people can deserve

the censure of being more averse from learning than any other, yet at all times knowledge must have encountered impediments, and wit been mortified with contempt, or harassed with persecution.

It is not necessary, however, to join immediately in the outcry, or to condemn mankind as pleased with ignorance, or always envious of superior abilities. The miseries of the learned have been related by themselves; and since they have not been found exempt from that partiality with which men look upon their own actions and sufferings, we may conclude that they have not forgotten to deck their cause with the brightest ornaments and strongest colours. The logician collected all his subtilties when they were to be employed in his own defence; and the master of rhetoric exerted against his adversary all the arts by which hatred is embittered, and indignation inflamed.

To believe no man in his own cause, is the standing and perpetual rule of destributive justice. Since, therefore, in the controversy between the learned and their enemies, we have only the pleas of one party, of the party more able to delude our understandings, and engage our passions, we must determine our opinion by facts uncontested, and evidences on each side allowed to be genuine.

By this procedure, I know not whether the students will find their cause promoted, or the compassion which they expect much increased. Let their conduct be impartially surveyed; let them be allowed no longer to direct attention at their pleasure, by expatiating on their own desires; let neither the dignity of knowledge overawe the judgment, nor the graces of elegance seduce it. It will then, perhaps, be found that they were not able to produce claims to kinder treatment, but provoked the calamities which they suffered, and seldom wanted friends, but when they wanted virtue.

That few men, celebrated for theoretic wisdom, live with conformity to their precepts, must be readily confessed: and we cannot wonder that the indignation of mankind rises with great vehemence against those, who neglect the duties which they appear to know with so strong conviction the necessity of performing. Yet since no man has power of acting equal to that of thinking, I know not whether the speculatist may not sometimes incur censures too severe, and by those who form ideas of his life from their knowledge of his books, be considered as worse than others, only because he was expected to be better.

He, by whose writings the heart is rectified, the appetites counteracted, and the passions repressed, may be considered

as not unprofitable to the great republic of humanity, even though his behaviour should not always exemplify his rules. His instructions may diffuse their influence to regions, in which it will not be inquired, whether the author be *albus an ater*, good or bad; to times, when all his faults and all his follies shall be lost in forgetfulness, among things of no concern or importance to the world; and he may kindle in thousands and ten thousands that flame which burnt but dimly in himself, through the fumes of passion, or the damps of cowardice. The vicious moralist may be considered as a taper, by which we are lighted through the labyrinth of complicated passions; he extends his radiance further than his heat, and guides all that are within view, but burns only those who make too near approaches.

Yet since good or harm must be received for the most part from those to whom we are familiarly known, he whose vices overpower his virtues, in the compass to which his vices can extend, has no reason to complain that he meets not with affection or veneration, when those with whom he passes his life are more corrupted by his practice than enlightened by his ideas. Admiration begins where acquaintance ceases: and his favourers are distant, but his enemies at hand.

Yet many have dared to boast of neglected merit, and to challenge their age for cruelty and folly, of whom it cannot be alledged that they have endeavoured to increase the wisdom or virtue of their readers. They have been at once profligate in their lives, and licentious in their compositions: have not only forsaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure others after them. They have smoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of guilt, and taught temptation sweeter notes, softer blandishments, and stronger allurements.

It has been apparently the settled purpose of some writers, whose powers and acquisitions place them high in the rank of literature, to set fashion on the side of wickedness; to recommend debauchery and lewdness, by associating them with qualities most likely to dazzle the discernment, and attract the affections; and to show innocence and goodness with such attendant weaknesses as necessarily expose them to contempt and derision.

Such naturally found intimates among the corrupt, the thoughtless, and the intemperate; passed their lives amidst the levities of sportive idleness, or the warm professions of drunken friendship; and fed their hopes with the promises of wretches, whom their precepts had taught to scoff at truth. But when fools had laughed away their sprightliness, and the

languors of excess could no longer be relieved, they saw their protectors hourly drop away, and wondered and stormed to find themselves abandoned. Whether their companions persisted in wickedness, or returned to virtue, they were left equally without assistance; for debauchery is selfish and negligent, and from virtue the virtuous only can expect regard.

It is said by Florus of Catiline, who died in the midst of slaughtered enemies, that *his death had been illustrious, had it been suffered for his country*. Of the wits who have languished away life under the pressures of poverty, or in the restlessness of suspense, caressed and rejected, flattered and despised, as they were of more or less use to those who stiled themselves their patrons, it might be observed, that their miseries would enforce compassion, had they been brought upon them by honesty and religion.

The wickedness of a loose or profane author is more atrocious than that of the giddy libertine, or drunken ravisher, not only because it extends its effects wider, as a pestilence that taints the air is more destructive than poison infused in a draught, but because it is committed with cool deliberation. By the instantaneous violence of desire, a good man may sometimes be surprised before reflection can come to his rescue; when the appetites have strengthened their influence by habit, they are not easily resisted or suppressed; but for the rigid villany of studious lewdness, for the calm malignity of laboured impiety, what apology can be invented? What punishment can be adequate to the crime of him who retires to solitudes for the refinement of debauchery; who tortures his fancy, and ransacks his memory, only that he may leave the world less virtuous than he found it; that he may intercept the hopes of the rising generation: and spread snares for the soul with more dexterity?

What were their motives, or what their excuses, is below the dignity of reason to examine. If having extinguishnd in themselves the distinction of right and wrong, they were insensible of the miseries which they promoted, they deserved to be hunted down by the general compact, as no longer partaking of social nature; if influenced by the corruption of patrons or readers, they sacrificed their own convictions to vanity or interest, they were to be abhorred with more acrimony than he that murders for pay; since they committed greater crimes without greater temptations.

Of him, to whom much is given, much shall be required. Those, whom God has favoured with superior faculties, and made eminent for quickness of intuition and accuracy of distinctions, will certainly be regarded as culpable in his eye,

for defects and deviations which, in souls less enlightened, may be guiltless. But, surely, none can think without horrour on that man's condition who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and used the light imparted from heaven only to embellish folly, and shed lustre upon crimes.

No. 78. Saturday, December 15, 1750.

——Mors sola fatetur
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula. Juv.

Death only this mysterious truth unfolds,
The mighty soul how small a body holds. Dryden.

Corporal sensation is known to depend so much upon novelty, that custom takes away from many things their power of giving pleasure or pain. Thus a new dress becomes easy by wearing it, and the palate is reconciled by degrees to dishes which at first disgusted it. That by long habit of carrying a burden we lose, in great part, our sensibility of its weight, any man may be convinced by putting on for an hour the armour of our ancestors: for he will scarcely believe that men would have had much inclination to marches and battles, encumbered and oppressed, as he will find himself, with the ancient panoply. Yet the heroes that over-run regions, and stormed towns in iron accoutrements, he knows not to have been bigger, and has no reason to imagine them stronger, than the present race of men; he therefore must conclude, that their peculiar powers were conferred only by peculiar habits, and that their familiarity with the dress of war enabled them to move in it with ease, vigour, and agility.

Yet it seems to be the condition of our present state, that pain should be more fixed and permanent than pleasure. Uneasiness gives way by slow degrees, and is long before it quits its possession of the sensory; but all our gratifications are volatile, vagrant, and easily dissipated. The fragrance of the jessamine bower is lost after the enjoyment of a few moments, and the Indian wanders among his native spices without any sense of their exhalations. It is, indeed, not necessary to show by many instances what all mankind confess, by an incessant call for variety, and restless pursuit of enjoyments, which they value only because unpossessed.

Something similar, or analogous, may be observed in effects produced immediately upon the mind; nothing can

strongly strike or affect us, but what is rare or sudden. The most important events, when they become familiar, are no longer considered with wonder or solicitude, and that which at first filled up our whole attention, and left no place for any thought, is soon thrust aside into some remote repository of the mind, and lies among other lumber of the memory, overlooked and neglected. Thus far the mind resembles the body, but here the similitude is at an end.

The manner in which external force acts upon the body is very little subject to the regulation of the will; no man can at pleasure obtund or invigorate his senses, prolong the agency of any impulse, or continue the presence of any image traced upon the eye, or any sound infused into the ear. But our ideas are more subjected to choice; we can call them before us, and command their stay, we can facilitate and promote their recurrence, we can either repress their intrusion, or hasten their retreat. It is therefore the business of wisdom and virtue, to select among numberless objects striving for our notice, such as may enable us to exalt our reason, extend our views, and secure our happiness. But this choice is to be made with very little regard to rareness or frequency; for nothing is valuable merely because it is either rare or common, but because it is adapted to some useful purpose, and enables us to supply some deficiency of our nature.

Milton has judiciously represented the father of mankind, as seized with horrour and astonishment at the sight of death, exhibited to him on the mount of vision. For surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature: a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change not only of the place, but the manner of his being; an entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which perhaps he has not faculties to know; an immediate and perceptible communication with the supreme Being, and, what is above all distressful and alarming, the final sentence, and unalterable allotment.

Yet we to whom the shortness of life has given frequent occasions of contemplating mortality, can, without emotions, see generations of men pass away, and are at leisure to establish modes of sorrow, and adjust the ceremonial of death. We can look upon funeral pomp as a common spectacle in which we have no concern, and turn away from it to trifles and amusements, without dejection of look, or inquietude of heart.

It is, indeed, apparent from the constitution of the world, that there must be a time for other thoughts; and a perpetual

meditation upon the last hour, however, it may become the solitude of a monastery, is inconsist with many duties of common life. But surely the remembrance of death ought to predominate in our minds, as an habitual and settled principle, always operating, though not always perceived; and our attention should seldom wander so far from our own condition, as not to be recalled and fixed by sight of an event, which must soon, we know not how soon, happen likewise to ourselves, and of which, though we cannot appoint the time, we may secure the consequence.

Every instance of death may justly awaken our fears and quicken our vigilance, but its frequency so much weakens its effect, that we are seldom alarmed unless some close connection is broken, some scheme frustrated, or some hope defeated. Many therefore seem to pass on from youth to decrepitude without any reflection on the end of life, because they are wholly involved within themselves, and look on others only as inhabitants of the common earth, without any expectation of receiving good, or intention of bestowing it.

Events, of which we confess the importance, excite little sensibility, unless they affect us more nearly than as sharers in the common interest of mankind; that desire which every man feels of being remembered and lamented, is often mortified when we remark how little concern is caused by the eternal departure even of those who have passed their lives with public honours and been distinguished by extraordinary performances. It is not possible to be regarded with tenderness except by a few. That merit which gives greatness and renown, diffuses its influence to a wide compass, but acts weakly on every single breast; it is placed at a distance from common spectators, and shines like one of the remote stars, of which the light reaches us, but not the heat. The wit, the hero, the philosopher, whom their tempers or their fortunes have hindered from intimate relations, die, without any other effect than that of adding a new topic to the conversation of the day. They impress none with any fresh conviction of the fragility of our nature, because none had any particular interest in their lives, or was united to them by a reciprocation of benefits and endearments.

Thus it often happens, that those who in their lives were applauded and admired, are laid at last in the ground without the common honour of a stone; because by those excellencies with which many were delighted, none had been obliged, and though they had many to celebrate, they had none to love them.

Custom so far regulates the sentiments, at least of common minds, that I believe men may be generally observed to grow less tender as they advance in age. He, who, when life was new, melted at the loss of every companion, can look in time, without concern, upon the grave into which his last friend was thrown, and into which himself is ready to fall; not that he is more willing to die than formerly, but that he is more familiar to the death of others, and therefore is not alarmed so far as to consider how much nearer he approaches to his end. But this is to submit tamely to the tyranny of accident, and to suffer our reason to lie useless. Every funeral may justly be considered as a summons to prepare for that state, into which it shows us that we must some time enter; and the summons is more loud and piercing, as the event of which it warns us is at less distance. To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege, but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack.

It has always appeared to me one of the most striking passages in the visions of Quevedo, which stigmatises those as fools who complain that they failed of happiness by sudden death. "How," says he, "can death be sudden to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain?"

Since business and gaiety are always drawing our attention away from a future state, some admonition is frequently necessary to recall it to our minds, and what can more properly renew the impression than the examples of mortaliity which every day supplies? The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we must die: it will therefore be useful to accustom ourselves, whenever we see a funeral, to consider how soon we may be added to the number of those whose probation is past, and whose happiness or misery shall endure for ever.

No. 79. Tuesday, December 18, 1750.

Tam sæpe nostrum decipi Fabullum, quid
Miraris, Aule? Semper bonus homo tiro est. Mart.

You wonder I've so little wit,
Friend *John*, so often to be bit—
None better gaurd against a cheat
Than he who is a knave complete. F. Lewis.

Suspicion, however necessary it may be to our safe passage through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common

mon for us to learn the frauds by which ourselves have suffered; men who are once persuaded that deceit will be employed against them, sometimes think the same arts justified by the necessity of defence. Even they whose virtue is too well established to give way to example, or be shaken by sophistry, must yet feel their love of mankind diminished with their esteem, and grow less zealous for the happiness of those by whom they imagine their own happiness endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which suspicion has been strongly impressed, by long intercourse with the world, inflexible and severe, not easily softened by submission, melted by complaint, or subdued by supplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited miseries, and dissembled virtue, in time overcomes that disposition to tenderness and sympathy, which is so powerful in our younger years; and they that happen to petition the old for compassion or assistance, are doomed to languish without regard, and suffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeserving or ungrateful.

Historians are certainly chargeable with the depravation of mankind, when they relate without censure those stratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his destruction. A ship comes before a port, weather-beaten and shattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, supplying themselves with necessaries, or burying their dead. The humanity of the inhabitants inclines them to consent; the strangers enter the town with weapons concealed, fall suddenly upon their benefactors, destroy those that make resistance, and become masters of the place; they return home rich with plunder, and their success is recorded to encourage imitation.

But surely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with some regard to the universal interest of man. Those may justly be pursued as enemies to the community of nature, who suffer hostility to vacate the unalterable laws of right, and pursue their private advantage by means, which, if once established, must destroy kindness, cut off from every man all hopes of assistance from another, and fill the world with perpetual suspicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be restored, and those who have conquered by such treachery may be justly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too

often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to invite robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to suppress tenderness by suspicion; it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

No. 80. Saturday, December 22, 1750.

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte, *nec jam sustineant onus*
Silvæ laborantes.——— Hor.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the lab'ring woods below. Dryden.

As Providence has made the human soul an active being, always impatient for novelty, and struggling for something yet unenjoyed with unwearied progression, the world seems to have been eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity, and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning we watch the rising of the sun, and see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects in its gradual advance. After a few hours, we see the shades lengthen, and the light decline, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shining orbs different from each other in magnitude and splendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvests; the hill flatters with an extensive view, and the valley invites with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the golden age, an exemption from the change of seasons, and a perpetuity of spring; but I am not certain that in this state of imaginary happiness they have made sufficient provision for that insatiable demand of new gratifications, which seems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our sense of delight is in a great measure comparative, and arises at once from the sensations which we feel, and those which we remember. Thus ease after torment is pleasure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated, when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural tepidity;

but the joy ceases when we have forgot the cold: we must fall below ease again, if we desire to rise above it, and purchase new felicity by voluntary pain. It is therefore not unlikely, that however the fancy may be amused with the description of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no scenes are displayed but vallies enamelled with unfading flowers, and woods waving their perennial verdure, we should soon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languish for want of other subjects, call on Heaven for our wonted round of seasons, and think ourselves liberally recompensed for the inconveniencies of summer and winter, by new perceptions of the calmness and mildness of the intermediate variations.

Every season has its particular power of striking the mind. The nakedness and asperity of the wintry world always fill the beholder with pensive and profound astonishment; as the variety of the scene is lessened, its grandeur is increased; and the mind is swelled at once by the mingled ideas of the present and the past, of the beauties which have vanished from the eyes, and the waste and desolation that are now before them.

It is observed by Milton, that he who neglects to visit the country in spring, and rejects the pleasures that are then in their first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of *sullenness against nature*. If we allot different duties to different seasons, he may be charged with equal disobedience to the voice of nature, who looks on the bleak hills and leafless woods, without seriousness and awe. Spring is the season of gaiety, and winter of terrour; in spring the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the groves, and the eye of benevolence sparkles at the sight of happiness and plenty: In the winter, compassion melts at universal calamity, and the tear of softness starts at the wailings of hunger, and the cries of the creation in distress.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge heaviness and sorrow, nor do I recommend them beyond the degree necessary to maintain in its full vigour that habitual sympathy and tenderness, which, in a world of so much misery, is necessary to the ready discharge of our most important duties. The winter, therefore, is generally celebrated as the proper season for domestic merriment and gaiety. We are seldom invited by the votaries of pleasure to look abroad for any other purpose, than that we may shrink back with more satisfaction to our coverts, and when we have heard the howl of the tempest, and felt the gripe of the frost, congratulate each other with more gladness upon a close room, an easy chair, a large fire, and a smoking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and conversation. Differences, we know, are never so effectually laid asleep, as by some common calamity: an enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the same fire side, those, who, by the opposition of inclinations, or difference of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year; and when they have met, and find it their mutual interest to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wish for the continuance of the social season, with all its bleakness and all its severities.

To the men of study and imagination, the winter is generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and silence produce composure of mind, and concentration of ideas: and the privation of external pleasure naturally causes an effort to find entertainment within. This is the time in which those whom literature enables to find amusements for themselves, have more than common convictions of their own happiness. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from most of the diversions which are called in to assist the flight of time, they can find new subjects of inquiry, and preserve themselves from that weariness which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot indeed be expected of all to be poets and philosophers; it is necessary that the greater part of mankind should be employed in the minute business of common life; minute, indeed, not if we consider its influence upon our happiness, but if we respect the abilities requisite to conduct it. These must necessarily be more dependent on accident for the means of spending agreeably those hours which their occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on these I would willingly impress such a sense of the value of time, as may incline them to find out for their careless hours amusements of more use and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but strengthen the passions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and to profusion, to corruption and to ruin. It is unworthy of a reasonable being to spend any of the little time allotted us, without some tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our existence. And though every moment cannot be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the stated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet none should be so spent as to exclude wisdom or virtue, or pass without possibility of qualifying us more or less for the better employment of those which are to come.

It is scarcely possible to pass an hour in honest conversation, without being able, when we rise from it, to please ourselves with having given or received some advantages; but a man may shuffle cards, or rattle dice, from noon to midnight, without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other token than his gain or loss, and a confused remembrance of agitated passions, and clamorous altercations.

However, as experience is of more weight than precept, any of my readers, who are contriving how to spend the dreary months before them, may consider which of their past amusements fills them now with the greatest satisfaction, and resolve to repeat those gratifications of which the pleasure is most durable.

No. 81. Tuesday, December 25, 1750.

Discite Justitiam moniti——— Virg.

Hear, and be just.

Among questions which have been discussed without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedency or superior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement, and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alleged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as they are necessary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress; but which duty ought to be most esteemed, we may continue to debate without inconvenience, so all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need: for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind; and controversies, merely speculative, are of small importance in themselves, however they may have sometimes heated a disputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the Divine Author of our religion, it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories, without observing how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity, than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot mistake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us, in our transactions with others, is remarkably clear and comprehensive: "Whatsover ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them."—A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted as far as the private conscience requires to be informed; a law, of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention, and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal principle, they have inquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measure of right, must be such as we approve, and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced as requiring some skill in the direction of conscience to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the state of the supplicant, he should desire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is intrusted with the public safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is invested, gives away what is not his own, and apparently, does to others what he would not that others should do to him. Even the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by those laws which re-

gard the great republic of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security in which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason the state has not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited their lives by crimes against the laws of common morality, equally acknowledged by all nations, because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite, by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion, which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation, in those by whom this great rule has been commented and dilated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish, *debts of justice*, and *debts of charity*. The immediate and primary intention of this precept, is to establish a rule of justice; and I know not whether invention, or sophistry, can start a single difficulty to retard its application, when it is thus expressed and explained, *let every man allow the claim of right in another, which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.*

The discharge of the *debts of charity*, or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by justice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits in its own nature greater complication of circumstances, and greater latitude of choice. Justice is indispensably and universally necessary, and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform, and distinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion, and equally needful to the conciliation of the Divine favour, is yet, for the most part, with regard to its single acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow beings, allow in the distribution of kindness something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality, according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule, therefore, is not equally determinate and absolue, with respect to offices of kindness, and acts of liberality; because liberality and kindness, absolutely determined, would lose their nature; for how could we be called tender, or charitable, for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold?

Yet, even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence, no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others suffer for want, by considering how we should be affected in the same state; nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule than that of

doing what we should then expect from others. It indeed generally happens that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generosity; the same partiality to his own interest inclines one to large expectations, and the other to sparing distributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human nature will scarcely suffer a man groaning under the pressure of distress, to judge rightly of the kindness of his friends, or think they have done enough till his deliverance is completed; not therefore what we might wish, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant, since, though we can easily know how much we might claim, it is impossible to determine what we should hope.

But in all inquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occasional virtues, it is safest for minds not oppressed with superstitious fears to determine against their own inclinations, and secure themselves from deficiency, by doing more than they believe strictly necessary. For of this every man may be certain, that, if he were to exchange conditions with his dependent, he should expect more than, with the utmost exertion of his ardour, he will now prevail upon himself to perform: and when reason has no settled rule, and our passions are striving to mislead us, it is surely the part of a wise man to err on the side of safety.

No. 82. Saturday, December 29, 1750.

Omnia Castor *emit, sic fiet ut omnia vendat.* Mart.

Who buys without discretion, buys to sell.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—It will not be necessary to solicit your good will by any formal preface, when I have informed you, that I have long been known as the most laborious and zealous virtuoso that the present age has had the honour of producing, and that inconveniences have been brought upon me by an unextinguishable ardour of curiosity, and an unshaken perseverance in the acquisition of the productions of art and nature.

It was observed, from my entrance into the world, that I had something uncommon in my disposition, and that there appeared in me very early tokens of superior genius. I was always an enemy to trifles; the playthings which my mother bestowed upon me I immediately broke, that I might

discover the method of their structure, and the cause of their motions: of all the toys with which children are delighted I valued only my coral, and as soon as I could speak, asked, like Piersc, innumerable questions, which the maids about me could not resolve. As I grew older I was more thoughtful and serious, and instead of amusing myself with puerile diversions, made collections of natural rarities, and never walked into the fields without bringing home stones of remarkable forms, or insects of some uncommon species. I never entered an old house, from which I did not take away the painted glass, and often lamented that I was not one of that happy generation who demolished the convents and monasteries, and broke windows by law.

Being thus early possessed by a taste for solid knowledge, I passed my youth with very little disturbance from passions and appetites; and having no pleasure in the company of boys and girls, who talked of plays, politics, fashions, or love, I carried on my inquiries with incessant diligence, and had amassed more stones, mosses, and shells, than are to be found in many celebrated collections, at an age in which the greatest part of young men are studying under tutors, or endeavouring to recommend themselves to notice by their dress, their air, and their levities.

When I was two and twenty years old, I became, by the death of my father, possessed of a small estate in land, with a very large sum of money in the public funds, and must confess that I did not much lament him, for he was a man of mean parts, bent rather upon growing rich than wise. He once fretted at the expense of only ten shillings, which he happened to overhear me offering for the sting of a hornet, though it was a cold moist summer, in which very few hornets had been seen. He often recommended to me the study of physic, in which, said he, you may at once gratify your curiosity after natural history, and increase your fortune by benefitting mankind. I heard him, Mr. Rambler, with pitty, and as there was no prospect of elevating a mind formed to grovel, suffered him to please himself with hoping that I should sometime follow his advice. For you know that there are men with whom, when they have once settled a notion in their heads it is to very little purpose to dispute.

Being now left wholly to my own inclinations, I very soon enlarged the bounds of my curiosity, and contented myself no longer with such rarities as required only judgment and industry, and when once found, might be had for nothing. I now turned my thoughts to Exotics and Antiques, and became so well known for my generous patronage of ingenious men,

that my levee was crowded with visitants, some to see my museum, and others to increase its treasures, by selling me whatever they had brought from other countries.

I had always a contempt for that narrowness of conception, which contents itself with cultivating some single corner of the field of science; I took the whole region into my view, and wished it of yet greater extent. But no man's power can be equal to his will. I was forced to proceed by slow degrees, and to purchase what chance or kindness happened to present. I did not however proceed without some design, or imitate the indiscretion of those who begin a thousand collections, and finish none. Having been always a lover of geography, I determined to collect the maps drawn in the rude and barbarous times, before any regular surveys, or just observations; and have, at a great expense brought together a volume, in which, perhaps, not a single country is laid down according to its true situation, and by which, he that desires to know the errours of the ancient geographers, may be amply informed.

But my ruling passion is patriotism: my chief care has been to procure the products of our own country; and as Alfred received the tribute of the Welsh in wolves' heads, I allowed my tenants to pay their rents in butterflies, till I had exhausted the papilionaceous tribe. I then directed them to the pursuit of other animals, and obtained, by this easy method, most of the grubs and insects, which land, air, or water, can supply. I have three species of earth-worms not known to the naturalists, have discovered a new ephemera, and can show four wasps that were taken torpid in their winter quarters. I have, from my own ground, the longest blade of grass upon record, and once accepted, as a half year's rent for a field of wheat, an ear containing more grains than had been seen before upon a single stem.

One of my tenants so much neglected his own interest, as to supply me, in a whole summer, with only two horse-flies, and those of little more than the common size: and I was upon the brink of seizing for arrears, when his good fortune threw a white mole in his way, for which he was not only forgiven but rewarded.

These, however, were petty acquisitions, and made at small expense; nor should I have ventured to rank myself among the virtuoso without better claims. I have suffered nothing worthy the regard of a wise man to escape my notice: I have ransacked the old and the new world, and been equally attentive to past ages and the present. For the illustration of ancient history, I can show a marble, of which the inscription,

though it is not now legible, appears, from some broken remains of the letters, to have been Tuscan, and therefore probably engraved before the foundation of Rome. I have two pieces of porphyry found among the ruins of Ephesus, and three letters broken off by a learned traveller from the monuments of Persepolis; a piece of stone which paved the Areopagus of Athens, and a plate without figures or characters, which was found at Corinth, and which I therefore believe to be that metal which was once valued before gold. I have sand gathered out of the Granicus; a fragment of Trajan's bridge over the Danube; some of the mortar which cemented the watercourse of Tarquin; a horse-shoe broken on the Flaminian way; and a turf with five daisies dug from the field of Pharsalia.

I do not wish to raise the envy of unsuccessful collectors, by too pompous a display of my scientific wealth, but cannot forbear to observe, that there are few regions of the globe which are not honoured with some memorial in my cabinets. The Persian monarchs are said to have boasted the greatness of their empire, by being served at their tables with drink from the Ganges and the Danube: I can show one vial, of which the water was formerly an icicle on the crags of Caucasus, and another that contains what once was snow on the top of Atlas; in a third is dew brushed from a banana in the gardens of Ispahan; and, in another, brine that has rolled in the Pacific ocean. I flatter myself that I am writing to a man who will rejoice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country; and therefore I shall tell you that Britain can, by my care, boast of a snail that has crawled upon the wall of China; a humming bird which an American princess wore in her ear; the tooth of an elephant who carried the queen of Siam; the skin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the great mogul; a riband that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana; and a scymitar once wielded by a soldier of Abas the great.

In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to choose only by intrinsic worth, and real usefulness, without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of Cromwell's hair in a box turned from a piece of the royal oak; and keep in the same drawers, sand scraped from the coffin of king Richard, and a commission signed by Henry the seventh. I have equal veneration for the ruff of Elizabeth, and the shoe of Mary of Scotland; and should lose, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of Raleigh, and a stirrup of king James. I have paid the same price for a glove of Lewis, and

a thimble of queen Mary; for a fur cap of the Czar, and a boot of Charles of Sweeden.

You will easily imagine that these accumulations were not made without some diminution of my fortune, for I was so well known to spare no cost, that at every sale some bid against me for hire, some for sport, some for malice; and if I asked the price of any thing, it was sufficient to double the demand. For curiosity, trafficking thus with avarice, the wealth of India had not been enough; and I, by little and little, transferred all my money from the funds to my closet: here I was inclined to stop, and live upon my estate in literary leisure, but the sale of the Harleian collection shook my resolution: I mortgaged my land, and purchased thirty medals, which I could never find before. I have at length bought till I can buy no longer, and the cruelty of my creditors has seized my repository; I am therefore condemned to disperse what the labour of an age will not reassemble. I submit to that which cannot be opposed, and shall, in a short time, declare a sale. I have, while it is yet in my power, sent you a pebble, picked up by Tavernier on the banks of the Ganges; for which I desire no other recompense than that you will recommend my catalogue to the public.

QUISQUILIUS.

No. 83. TUESDAY, January 1, 1751.

Nisi utile est quod facias, stulta est gloria. PHED.

All useless science is an empty boast.

THE publication of the letter in my last paper has naturally led me to the consideration of that thirst after curiosities, which often draws contempt and ridicule upon itself, but which is perhaps no otherwise blamable, than as it wants those circumstantial recommendations which add lustre even to moral excellencies, and are absolutely necessary to the grace and beauty of indifferent actions.

Learning confers so much superiority on those who possess it, that they might probably have escaped all censure had they been able to agree among themselves; but as envy and competition have divided the republic of letters into factions, they have neglected the common interest; each has called in foreign aid, and endeavoured to strengthen his own cause by the frown of power, the hiss of ignorance, and the clamour

of popularity. They have all engaged in feuds, till by mutual hostilities they demolished those outworks which veneration had raised for their security, and exposed themselves to barbarians, by whom every region of science is equally laid waste.

Between men of different studies and professions, may be observed a constant reciprocation of reproaches. The collector of shells and stones derides the folly of him who pastes leaves and flowers upon paper, pleases himself with colours that are perceptibly fading, and amasses with care what cannot be preserved. The hunter of insects stands amazed that any man can waste his short time upon lifeless matter, while many tribes of animals yet want their history. Every one is inclined not only to promote his own study, but to exclude all others from regard, and having heated his imagination with some favourite pursuit, wonders that the rest of mankind are not seized with the same passion.

There are, indeed, many subjects of study which seem but remotely allied to useful knowledge, and of little importance to happiness or virtue; nor is it easy to forbear some sallies of merriment, or expressions of pity, when we see a man wrinkled with attention, and emaciated with solicitude, in the investigation of questions, of which, without visible inconvenience, the world may expire in ignorance. Yet it is dangerous to discourage well intended labours or innocent curiosity: for he who is employed in searches, which by any deduction of consequences tend to the benefit of life, is surely laudable, in comparison of those who spend their time in counteracting happiness, and filling the world with wrong and danger, confusion and remorse. No man can perform so little as not to have reason to congratulate himself on his merits, when he beholds the multitudes that live in total idleness, and have never yet endeavoured to be useful.

It is impossible to determine the limits of inquiry, or to foresee what consequences a new discovery may produce. He who suffers not his faculties to lie torpid, has a chance, whatever be his employment, of doing good to his fellow creatures. The man that first ranged the woods in search of medicinal springs, or climbed the mountains for salutary plants, has undoubtedly merited the gratitude of posterity, how much soever his frequent miscarriages might excite the scorn of his contemporaries. If what appears little be universally despised, nothing greater can be attained, for all that is great was at first little, and rose to its present bulk by gradual accessions, and accumulated labours.

Those who lay out time or money in assembling matter for

contemplation, are doubtless entitled to some degree of respect, though in a flight of gaiety it be easy to ridicule their treasure, or in a fit of sullenness to despise it. A man who thinks only on the particular object before him, goes not away much illuminated by having enjoyed the privilege of handling the tooth of a shark, or the paw of a white bear; yet there is nothing more worthy of admiration to a philosophical eye than the structure of animals, by which they are qualified to support life in the elements or climates to which they are appropriated; and of all natural bodies it must be generally confessed, that they exhibit evidences of infinite wisdom, bear their testimony to the supreme reason, and excite in the mind new raptures of gratitude, and new incentives to piety.

To collect the productions of art, and examples of mechanical science or manual ability, is unquestionably useful, even when the things themselves are of small importance, because it is always advantageous to know how far the human powers have proceeded, and how much experience has found to be within the reach of diligence. Idleness and timidity often despair without being overcome, and forbear attempts for fear of being defeated; and we may promote the invigoration of faint endeavours, by showing what has been already performed. It may sometimes happen that the greatest efforts of ingenuity have been exerted in trifles; yet the same principles and expedients may be applied to more valuable purposes, and the movements, which put into action machines of no use but to raise the wonder of ignorance, may be employed to drain fens, or manufacture metals, to assist the architect, or preserve the sailor.

For the utensils, arms, or dresses of foreign nations, which make the greatest part of many collections, I have little regard, when they are valued only because they are foreign, and can suggest no improvement of our own practice. Yet they are not equally useless, nor can it be always safely determined which should be rejected or retained: for they may sometimes unexpectedly contribute to the illustration of history, and to the knowledge of the natural commodities of the country, or of the genius and customs of its inhabitants.

Rarities there are of yet a lower rank, which owe their worth merely to accident, and which can convey no information, nor satisfy any rational desire. Such are many fragments of antiquity, as urns and pieces of pavement; and things held in veneration only for having been once the property of some eminent person, as the armour of king Henry; or for having been used on some remarkable occasion, as the

lantern of Guy Faux. The loss or preservation of these seems to be a thing indifferent, nor can I perceive why the possession of them should be coveted. Yet, perhaps, even this curiosity is implanted by nature; and when I find Tully confessing of himself, that he could not forbear at Athens to visit the walks and houses which the old philosophers had frequented or inhabited, and recollect the reverence which every nation, civil and barbarous, has paid to the ground where merit has been buried,* I am afraid to declare against the general voice of mankind, and am inclined to believe, that this regard, which we involuntarily pay to the meanest relique of a man great and illustrious, is intended as an incitement to labour, and an encouragement to expect the same renown, if it be sought by the same virtues.

The virtuoso therefore cannot be said to be wholly useless; but perhaps he may be sometimes culpable for confining himself to business below his genius, and losing, in petty speculations, those hours by which, if he had spent them in nobler studies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world. It is never without grief that I find a man capable of ratiocination or invention enlisting himself in this secondary class of learning; for when he has once discovered a method of gratifying his desire of eminence by expense rather than by labour, and known the sweets of a life blest at once with the ease of idleness, and the reputation of knowledge, he will not easily be brought to undergo again the toil of thinking, or leave his toys and trinkets for arguments and principles; arguments which require circumspection and vigilance, and principles which cannot be obtained but by the drudgery of meditation. He will gladly shut himself up for ever with his shells and metals, like the companions of Ulysses, who, having tasted the fruit of Lotos, would not, even by the hope of seeing their own country, be tempted again to the dangers of the sea.

> Ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ βουλοῖο μετ' ἀνδράσι Λωτοφάγοισι,
> Λωτον ἐρεπτόμενοι μίνυμεν νοστοῦ τε λάθεσθαι.

> ——— Whoso tastes,
> Insatiat eriots in the sweet repasts;
> Nor other home nor other care intends,
> But quits his house, his country, and his friends.
>
> Pope.

Collections of this kind are of use to the learned as heaps of stones and piles of timber are necessary to the architect.

* See this sentiment illustrated by a most splendid passage in Dr. Johnson's "Journey to the Western Islands," Vol. VIII. p. 395-6.

But to dig the quarry or to search the field, requires not much of any quality beyond stubborn perseverance; and though genius must often lie unactive without this humble assistance, yet this can claim little praise, because every man can afford it.

To mean understandings, it is sufficient honour to be numbered amongst the lowest labourers of learning; but different abilities must find different tasks. To hew stone, would have been unworthy of Palladio; and to have rambled in search of shells and flowers, had but ill-suited with the capacity of Newton.

No. 84. Saturday, January 5, 1751.

Cunarum fueras motor, Charidene, *mearum,*
Et pueri custos, assiduusque comes.
Jam mihi nigrescunt tonsa radaria barba,———
Sed tibi non crevi: te noster villicus horret:
Te dispensator, te domus ipsa pavet.
Corripis, observas, quereris, suspiria ducis,
Et vix a ferulis abstinet ira manum. Mart.

You rock'd my cradle, were my guide
In youth, still tending at my side:
But now, dear Sir, my beard is grown,
Still I'm a child to thee alone.
Our steward, butler, cook, and all
Your fright, nay even the very wall;
You pry, and frown, and growl, and chide,
And scarce will lay the rod aside. F. Lewis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—You seem in all your papers to be an enemy to tyranny, and to look with impartiality upon the world; I shall therefore lay my case before you, and hope by your decision to be set free from unreasonable restraints, and enabled to justify myself against the accusations which spite and peevishness produce against me.

At the age of five years I lost my mother, and my father, being not qualified to superintend the education of a girl, committed me to the care of his sister, who instructed me with the authority, and, not to deny her what she may justly claim, with the affection of a parent. She had not very elevated sentiments or extensive views, but her principles were good, and her intentions pure; and, though some may practise more virtues, scarce any commit fewer faults.

Under this good lady, I learned all the common rules of decent behaviour, and standing maxims of domestic prudence; and might have grown up by degrees to a country gentlewoman, without any thoughts of ranging beyond the neighbourhood, had not Flavia come down last summer, to visit her relations in the next village. I was taken, of course, to compliment the stranger, and was, at the first sight, surprised at the unconcern with which she saw herself gazed at by the company whom she had never known before; at the carelessness with which she received compliments, and the readiness with which she returned them. I found she had something which I perceived myself to want, and could not but wish to be like her, at once easy and officious, attentive and unembarrassed. I went home, and for four days could think and talk of nothing but Miss Flavia; though my aunt told me, that she was a forward slut, and thought herself wise before her time.

In a little time she repaid my visit, and raised in my heart a new confusion of love and admiration. I soon saw her again, and still found new charms in her air, conversation, and behaviour. You, who have perhaps seen the world, may have observed, that formality soon ceases between young persons. I know not how others are affected on such occasions, but I found myself irresistibly allured to friendship and intimacy, by the familiar complaisance and airy gaiety of Flavia; so that in a few weeks I became her favourite, and all the time was passed with me, that she could gain from ceremony and visit.

As she came often to me, she necessarily spent some hours with my aunt, to whom she paid great respect by low courtesies, submissive compliance, and soft acquiescence: but as I became gradually more accustomed to her manners, I discovered that her civility was general; that there was a certain degree of deference shown by her to circumstances and appearances; that many went away flattered by her humility, whom she despised in her heart; that the influence of far the greatest part of those with whom she conversed ceased with their presence: and that sometimes she did not remember the names of them, whom, without any intentional insincerity or false commendation, her habitual civility had sent away with very high thoughts of their own importance.

It was not long before I perceived, that my aunt's opinion was not of much weight in Flavia's deliberations, and that she was looked upon by her as a woman of narrow sentiments, without the knowledge of books, or observations on mankind. I had hitherto considered my aunt, as entitled by her wisdom and experience to the highest reverence, and

could not forbear to wonder that any one so much younger should venture to suspect her of errour, or ignorance; but my surprise was without uneasiness, and being now accustomed to think Flavia always in the right, I readily learned from her to trust my own reason, and to believe it possible, that they who had lived longer might be mistaken.

Flavia had read much, and used so often to converse on subjects of learning, that she put all the men in the country to flight, except the old parson, who declared himself much delighted with her company, because she gave him opportunities to recollect the studies of his younger years, and, by some mention of ancient story. had made him rub the dust off his Homer, which had lain unregarded in his closet. With Homer, and a thousand other names familiar to Flavia, I had no acquaintance, but began, by comparing her accomplishments with my own, to repine at my education, and wish that I had not been so long confined to the company of those from whom nothing but housewifery was to be learned. I then set myself to peruse such books as Flavia recommended, and heard her opinion of their beauties and defects. I saw new worlds hourly bursting upon my mind, and was enraptured at the prospect of diversifying life with endless entertainment.

The old lady finding that a large screen, which I had undertaken to adorn with turkey-work against winter, made very slow advances, and that I had added in two months but three leaves to a flowered apron then in the frame, took the alarm, and with all the zeal of honest folly exclaimed against my new acquaintance, who had filled me with idle notions, and turned my head with books. But she had now lost her authority, for I began to find innumerable mistakes in her opinions, and improprieties in her language; and therefore thought myself no longer bound to pay much regard to one who knew little beyond her needle and her dairy, and who professed to think that nothing more is required of a woman than to see that the house is clean, and that the maids go to bed and rise at a certain hour.

She seemed however to look upon Flavia as seducing me, and to imagine that when her influence was withdrawn, I should return to my allegiance; she therefore contented herself with remote hints, and gentle admonitions, intermixed with sage histories of the miscarriages of wit, and disappointments of pride. But since she has found, that though Flavia is departed, I still persist in my new scheme, she has at length lost her patience, she snatches my book out of my hand, tears my paper if she finds me writing, burns Flavia's

letters before my face when she can seize them, and threatens to lock me up, and to complain to my father of my perverseness. If women, she says, would but know their duty and their interest, they would be careful to acquaint themselves with family affairs, and many a penny might be saved; for while the mistress of the house is scribbling and reading, servants are junketing, and linen is wearing out. She then takes me round the rooms, shows me the worked hangings, and chairs of tent-stitch, and asks whether all this was done with a pen and a hook?

I cannot deny that I sometimes laugh and sometimes am sullen; but she has not delicacy enough to be much moved either with my mirth or my gloom, if she did not think the interest of the family endangered by this change of my manners. She had for some years marked out young Mr. Surly, an heir in the neighbourhood, remarkable for his love of fighting cocks, as an advantageous match; and was extremely pleased with the civilities which he used to pay me, till under Flavia's tuition I learned to talk of subjects which he could not understand. This, she says, is the consequence of female study: girls grow too wise to be advised, and too stubborn to be commanded; but she is resolved to try who shall govern, and will thwart my humour till she breaks my spirit.

These menaces, Mr. Rambler, sometimes make me quite angry; for I have been sixteen these ten weeks, and think myself exempted from the dominion of a governess, who has no pretensions to more sense or knowledge than myself. I am resolved, since I am as tall and as wise as other women, to be no longer treated like a girl. Miss Flavia has often told me that ladies of my age go to assemblies and routes, without their mothers and their aunts; I shall therefore, from this time, leave asking advice, and refuse to give accounts. I wish you would state the time at which young ladies may judge for themselves, which I am sure you cannot but think ought to begin before sixteen; if you are inclined to delay it longer, I shall have very little regard to your opinion.

My aunt often tells me of the advantages of experience, and of the deference due to seniority; and both she, and all the antiquated part of the world, talk of the unreserved obedience which they paid to the command of their parents, and the undoubting confidence with which they listened to their precepts: of the terrours which they felt at a frown, and the humility with which they supplicated forgiveness, whenever they had offended. I cannot but fancy that this boast is too

general to be true, and that the young and the old were always at variance. I have, however, told my aunt, that I will mend whatever she will prove to be wrong; but she replies that she has reasons of her own, and that she is sorry to live in an age when girls have the impudence to ask for proofs.

I beg once again, Mr. Rambler, to know whether I am not as wise as my aunt, and whether, when she presumes to check me as a baby, I may not pluck up a spirit and return her insolence? I shall not proceed to extremities without your advice, which is therefore impatiently expected by

MYRTILLA.

P. S. Remember I am past sixteen.

No. 85. TUESDAY, January 8, 1751.

Otia si tollas periere Cupidinis *arcus*
Contemptæque jacent, et sine luce faces. OVID.

At busy hearts in vain Love's arrows fly;
Dim'd, scorn'd, and impotent, his torches lie.

Many writers of eminence in physic have laid out their diligence upon the consideration of those distempers to which men are exposed by particular states of life, and very learned treatises have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the sea, and the mines. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accustomed to anatomical inquiries, and medical refinements, would not find reasons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him, that almost every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and safer than a life of sloth.

The necessity of action is not only demonstrable from the fabric of the body, but evident from observation of the universal practice of mankind, who, for the preservation of health, in those whose rank or wealth exempts them from the necessity of lucrative labour, have invented sports and diversions, though not of equal use to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to those who practise them, and differing only from the drudgery of the husbandman and manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful sense of compulsion. The huntsman rises early, pursues his game through all the dangers and obstructions of the chace, swims rivers, and scales precipices, till he returns home no less harassed than the soldier, and has perhaps sometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or

death: yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither subject to the commands of a general, nor dreads any penalties for neglect and disobedience; he has neither profit nor honour to expect from his perils and his conquests, but toils without the hope of mural or civic garlands, and must content himself with the praise of his tenants and companions.

But such is the constitution of man, that labour may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite, if it be considered how much happiness is gained, and how much misery escaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the most that can be hoped from a sedentary and unactive habit; ease, a neutral state between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigour, readiness of enterprise, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand. Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain: and whatever hope the dreams of speculation may suggest of observing the proportion between nutriment and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy state by supplies exactly equal to its waste, we know that, in effect, the vital powers, unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid; that, as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but, while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from heaven, and chronical from ourselves; the dart of death indeed falls from heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct: to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly.*

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present state is capable, that the mind and body should both be kept in

* This passage was once strangely supposed by some readers to recommend suicide, instead of *exercise*, which is surely the more obvious meaning. See, however, a letter from Dr. JOHNSON on the subject in BOSWELL's Life, vol. iv. p. 162. C.

action; that neither the faculties of the one nor of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary submission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expense of that health, which must enable it either to give pleasure to its possessor, or assistance to others. It is too frequently the pride of students to despise those amusements and recreations, which give to the rest of mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart. Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent with such skill in common exercises or sports as is necessary to make them practised with delight, and no man is willing to do that of which the necessity is not pressing and immediate, when he knows that his awkwardness must make him ridiculous.

Ludere qui nescit, campestribus abstinet armis,
Indoctusque pilæ, discive, trochive quiescit,
Ne spissæ risum tollant impunè coronæ. HOR.

He that's unskilful will not toss a ball,
Nor run, nor wrestle, for he fears the fall;
He justly fears to meet deserv'd disgrace,
And that the ring will hiss the baffled ass. CREECH.

Thus the man of learning is often resigned, almost by his own consent, to languor and pain; and while in the prosecution of his studies he suffers the weariness of labour, is subject by his course of life to the maladies of idleness.

It was, perhaps, from the observation of this mischievous omission in those who are employed about intellectual objects, that Locke has, in his *System of Education*, urged the necessity of a trade to men of all ranks and professions, that when the mind is weary with its proper task, it may be relaxed by a slighter attention to some mechanical operation; and that while the vital functions are resuscitated and awakened by vigorous motion, the understanding may be restrained from that vagrance and dissipation by which it relieves itself after a long intenseness of thought, unless some allurement be presented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is so little reason for expecting frequent conformity to Locke's precept, that it is not necessary to inquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occasion to petty emulation, and degenerate ambition; and whether, if our divines and physicians were taught the lathe and the chisel, they would not think more of their tools than their books? as Nero neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too

much pleased with little things; but what is there which may not be perverted? Let us remember how much worse employment might have been found for those hours, which a manual occupation appears to engross; let us compute the profit with the loss, and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his studies, consider likewise that perhaps by the same attractions he is sometimes withheld from debauchery, or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from lust.

I have always admired the wisdom of those by whom our female education was instituted, for having contrived, that every woman, of whatever condition, should be taught some arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of recluse and domestic leisure may be filled up. These arts are more necessary, as the weakness of their sex and the general system of life debar ladies from many employments which, by diversifying the circumstances of men, preserve them from being cankered by the rust of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happiness of the world may be the consequence of this judicious regulation. Perhaps the most powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confusion and slaughter that would be produced by so many piercing eyes and vivid understandings, turned loose at once upon mankind, with no other business than to sparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to destroy.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary skill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governess, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous ensnarers of the soul, by enabling themselves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and with idleness her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows, and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed; and Hector, in the Iliad, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terrours, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff.

It is certain that any wild wish or vain imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind, as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetic principle, that *nature abhors a vacuum*, may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however absurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of those desires that

disturb his life and contaminate his conscience, from some unhappy hour when too much leisure exposed him to their incursions; for he has lived with little observation either on himself or others, who does not know that to be idle is to be vicious.

No. 86. Saturday, January 12, 1751.

Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus et aure. Hor.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers scan. Elphinston.

One of the ancients has observed, that the burthen of government is increased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that excellence is consecrated by death; when envy and interest cease to act against it, and those passions by which it was at first vilified and opposed, now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He that succeeds a celebrated writer, has the same difficulties to encounter; he stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object.

One of the old poets congratulates himself that he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessors, the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied with contempt, "that he had heard the nightingale herself;" and the same treatment must every man expect, whose praise is, that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections, I am about to offer to my reader some observations upon *Paradise Lost*, and hope, that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to the commonwealth of

learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errours to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter orb arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this poem under most of the general topics of criticism, has barely touched upon the versification; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with what minute attention the ancient critics considered the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which were most barren of ideas, and required labour, rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet. Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require, he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds, and more affected by the same words in one order than in another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal; but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the versification of Milton I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall therefore studiously decline the dialect of grammarians; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented but because the language already in use was insufficient. If, therefore, I shall sometimes seem obscure, it may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroic measure of the English language may be pro-

perly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line.

> Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
> But whó can beár th' appróach of cértain fáte?
>
> DRYDEN.

> Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
> His cónstant lámp, and wáves his púrple wings
> Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought smile
> Of hárlots, jóveless, jóyless, únendéar'd. MILTON.

The accent may be observed, in the second line of Dryden, and the second and fourth of Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussion at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should therefore be exactly kept in distichs, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But, to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has therefore enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed; this, though it always injures the harmony of the line, considered by itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound, and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances, and Milton seldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the music.

> Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
> Both turn'd, and under open sky adorn'd
> The god that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
> Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe.
> *And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,*
> Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,
> Which we in our appointed work employ'd
> Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
> *And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss*
> Ordain'd by thee: and this delicious place,
> For us too large; where thy abundance wants
> Partakers, and uncrop'd falls to the ground;
> But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
> To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
> Thy goodness infinite, both when we awake,
> And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In this passage it will be at first observed, that the lines are not equally harmonious, and upon a nearer examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the rest are more or less licentious with respect to the accent. In some the accent is equally upon two syllables together, and in both strong. As

> Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, *both stood,*
> *Both turn'd,* and under open sky ador'd
> The god that made both sky, *air, earth,* and heav'n.

In others the accent is equally upon two syllables, but upon both weak.

> ———a race
> To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
> Thy goodness *infinite,* both when we wake,
> *And when* we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In the first pair of syllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactness, without any unpleasing diminution of harmony, as may be observed in the lines already cited, and more remarkably in this.

> ———Thou also mad'st the night,
> *Maker* omnipotent! and thou the day.

But, excepting in the first pair of syllables, which may be considered as arbitrary, a poet who, not having the invention or knowledge of Milton, has more need to allure his audience my musical cadences, should seldom suffer more than one aberration from the rule in any single verse.

There are two lines in this passage more remarkably unharmonious:

> ———This delicious place,
> For us too large; *where thy* abundance wants
> Partakers, and uncrop'd *falls to* the ground.

Here the third pair of syllables in the first, and fourth, pair in the second verse, have their accents retrogade or inverted; the first syllable being strong or acute, and the second weak. The detriment which the measure suffers by this inversion of the accents is sometimes less perceptible, when the verses are carried one into another, but is remarkably striking in this place, where the vicious verse concludes a period, and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every single line. This will appear by reading a couplet

in which Cowley, an author not sufficiently studious of harmony, has committed the same fault.

> ———his harmless life
> Does with substantial blessedness abound,
> And the soft wings of peace *cover* him round.

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as Milton expresses in his sonnet, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse, the *Iambic*, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroic measure is derived, and the *Trochaic*, consisting in a like alternation of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance, nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of Milton.

No. 87. Tuesday, January 15, 1751.

> *Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,*
> *Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,*
> *Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem.* Hor.

> The slave to envy, anger, wine, or love,
> The wretch of sloth, its excellence shall prove:
> Fierceness itself shall hear its rage away,
> When list'ning calmly to th' instructive lay. Francis.

That few things are so liberally bestowed, or squandered with so little effect, as good advice, has been generally observed; and many sage positions have been advanced concerning the reasons of this complaint, and the means of removing it. It is indeed an important and noble inquiry, for little would be wanting to the happiness of life, if every man could conform to the right as soon as he was shown it.

This perverse neglect of the most salutary precepts, and stubborn resistance of the most pathetic persuasion, is usually imputed to him by whom the counsel is received, and we often hear it mentioned, as a sign of hopeless depravity

that though good advice was given, it has wrought no reformation.

Others, who imagine themselves to have quicker sagacity and deeper penetration. have found out that the inefficacy of advice is usually the fault of the counsellor. and rules have been laid down, by which this important duty may be successfully performed: We are directed by what tokens to discover the favourable moment at which the heart is disposed for the operation of truth and reason, with what address to administer, and with what vehicles to disguise *the cathartics of the soul*

But, notwithstanding this specious expedient. we find the world yet in the same state: advice is still given, but still received with disgust: nor has it appeared that the bitterness of the medicine has been yet abated, or its power increased, by any methods of preparing it.

If we consider the manner in which those who assume the office of directing the conduct of others execute their undertaking, it will not be very wonderful that their labours, however zealous or affectionate, are frequently useless. For what is the advice that is commonly given? A few general maxims, enforced with vehemence and inculcated with importunity, but failing for want of particular reference and immediate application.

It is not often that any man can have so much knowledge of another, as is necessary to make instruction useful. We are sometimes not ourselves conscious of the original motives of our actions, and when we know them, our first care is to hide them from the sight of others, and often from those most diligently, whose superiority either of power or understanding may entitle them to inspect our lives: it is therefore very probable that he who endeavours the cure of our intellectual malaadies, mistakes their cause; and that his prescriptions avail nothing, because he knows not which of the passions or desires is vitiated.

Advice, as it always gives a temporary appearance of superiority, can never be very grateful, even when it is most necessary or most judicious. But for the same reason every one is eager to instruct his neighbours. To be wise or to be virtuous, is to buy dignity and importance at a high price; but when nothing is necessary to elevation but detection of the follies or the faults of others, no man is so insensible to the voice of fame as to linger on the ground.

——Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
Tollere humo, victorque virûm volitare per ora. . VIRG.

New ways I must attempt, my groveling name
To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame. DRYDEN.

Vanity is so frequently the apparent motive of advice, that we, for the most part, summon our powers to oppose it without any very accurate inquiry whether it is right. It is sufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes, at our expense, and assumes authority over us without our permission: for many would contentedly suffer the consequences of their own mistakes, rather than the insolence of him who triumphs as their deliverer.

It is, indeed, seldom found that any advantages are enjoyed with that moderation which the uncertainty of all human good so powerfully enforces; and therefore the adviser may justly suspect, that he has inflamed the opposition which he laments by arrogance and superciliousness. He may suspect, but needs not hastily to condemn himself, for he can rarely be certain that the softest language or most humble diffidence would have escaped resentment: since scarcely any degree of circumspection can prevent or obviate the rage with which the slothful, the impotent, and the unsuccessful, vent their discontent upon those that excel them. Modesty itself, if it is praised, will be envied; and there are minds so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompense is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain.

The number of those whom the love of themselves has thus far corrupted, is perhaps not great; but there are few so free from vanity, as not to dictate to those who will hear their instructions with a visible sense of their own beneficence; and few to whom it is not unpleasing to receive documents, however tenderly and cautiously delivered, or who are not willing to raise themselves from pupilage, by disputing the propositions of their teacher.

It was the maxim, I think, of Alphonsus of Arragon, that *dead counsellors are safest*. The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive; because they are heard with patience and with reverence. We are not unwilling to believe that man wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition, and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition, which

occur in oral conferences, are avoided. An author cannot obtrude his service unasked, nor can be often suspected of any malignant intention to insult his readers with his knowledge or his wit. Yet so prevalent is the habit of comparing ourselves with others, while they remain within the reach of our passions, that books are seldom read with complete impartiality, but by those from whom the writer is placed at such a distance that his life or death is indifferent.

We see that volumes may be perused, and perused with attention, to little effect; and that maxims of prudence, or principles of virtue, may be treasured in the memory without influencing the conduct. Of the numbers that pass their lives among books, very few read to be made wiser or better, apply any general reproof of vice to themselves, or try their own manners by axioms of justice. They purpose either to consume those hours for which they can find no other amusement, to gain or preserve that respect which learning has always obtained; or to gratify their curiosity with knowledge, which, like treasures buried and forgotten, is of no use to others or themselves.

"The preacher (says a French author,) may spend an hour in explaining and enforcing a precept of religion, without feeling any impression from his own performance, because he may have no further design than to fill up his hour." A student may easily exhaust his life in comparing divines and moralists, without any practical regard to morality or religion; he may be learning not to live, but to reason; he may regard only the elegance of style, justness of argument, and accuracy of method; and may enable himself to criticise with judgment, and dispute with subtlety, while the chief use of his volumes is unthought of, his mind is unaffected, and his life is unreformed.

But though truth and virtue are thus frequently defeated by pride, obstinacy, or folly, we are not allowed to desert them; for whoever can furnish arms which they hitherto have not employed, may enable them to gain some hearts which would have resisted any other method of attack. Every man of genius has some arts of fixing the attention peculiar to himself, by which, honestly exerted, he may benefit mankind: for the arguments for purity of life fail of their due influence, not because they have been considered and confuted, but because they have been passed over without consideration. To the position of Tully, that if virtue could be seen, she must be loved, may be added, that if truth could be heard, she must be obeyed.

No. 88. Saturday, January 19, 1751.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti:
Audebit quæcunque minus splendoris habebunt,
Aut sine pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur,
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedant,
Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ. Hor.

But he that hath a curious piece design'd,
When he begins must take a censor's mind,
Severe and honest; and what words appear
Too light and trival, or too weak to bear
The weighty sense, nor worth the reader's care,
Shake off, tho' stubborn, they are loth to move,
And tho' we fancy, dearly tho' we love. Creech.

"There is no reputation for genius," says Quintilian, "to be gained by writing on things, which, however necessary, have little splendour or show. The height of a building attracts the eye, but the foundations lie without regard. Yet since there is not any way to the top of science, but from the lowest parts, I shall think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, which he that wants cannot be an orator."

Confirmed and animated by this illustrious precedent, I shall continue my inquiries into Milton's art of versification. Since, however minute the employment may appear, of analysing lines into syllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a solemn deliberation upon accents and pauses, it is certain that without this petty knowledge, no man can be a poet, and that from the proper disposition of single sounds, results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passions.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall upon its proper place, but that the syllables themselves may be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportionate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semi-vowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined, and, by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because our monosyllables being of Teutonic original, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

——Every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficiently conceived, by attending to the following passages:

Immortal *Amarant*——there grows
And flow'rs aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
With these that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams.

The same comparison that I propose to be made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage, may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations:

——Under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich in-lay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

——Here in close recess
With flowers, garlands, and sweet smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve first deck'd her nuptial bed;
And heav'nly choirs the hymenean sung.

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed, not only to the music of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in use, but to the softness of the Italian, the most mellifluous of all modern poetry, seems fully convinced of the unfitness of our language for smooth versification, and is therefore pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance: for this reason, and I believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add little but music to his poem.

——The richer seat
Of *Atabalipa*, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city *Gerion's* sons
Call *El Dorado*.——

The moon—The *Tuscan* artist views
At evening, from the top of *Fesole*
Or in *Valdarno*, to descry new lands.———

He has, indeed, been more attentive to his syllables, than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of Milton's versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As

———Knowledge
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

This license, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the critics on *Paradise Lost* have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for continuing it.* But our language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the alexandrine of the French; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e*, which our ancestors added to most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants, and it is more necessary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedness and asperity, and has left our harsh cadences yet harsher. But his elisions are not all equally to be censured; in some syllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few may be safely imitated. The abscission of a vowel is undoubtedly

* In the original Rambler, in folio, our author's opinion appears different, and is thus expressed:—"This license, though an innovation in English poetry, is yet allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the critics on Paradise Lost have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for introducing it." C.

vicious when it is strong-sounded, and makes, with its associate consonant, a full and audible syllable.

———What he gives,
Spiritual, may to purest spirits be found,
No ingrateful food, and food alike these pure
Intelligential substances require.

Fruits,———*Hesperian* fables true,
If true, here *only*, and of delicious taste.

———Evening now approach'd,
For we have *also* our evening and our morn.

Of guests he makes them slaves,
Inhospita*bly*, and kills their infant males.

And vital Vir*tue* infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass.———

God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him.

I believe every reader will agree, that in all those passages, though not equally in all, the music is injured, and in some the meaning obscured. There are other lines in which the vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronounced in common speech, that the loss of it in poetry is scarcely perceived; and therefore such compliance with the measures may be allowed.

———Nature breeds
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abomina*ble*, inutter*able*; and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd———

——— From the shore
They view'd the vast immensur*able* abyss.
Impenetr*able*, impal'd with circling fire.
To none communica*ble* in earth or heav'n.

Yet even these contractions increase the roughness of a language too rough already; and though in long poems they may be sometimes suffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uses in his poems the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables.

———Thus it shall befal
Him who to worth in woman over-trust*ing*
Lets her will rule———

I also err'd in over-much admir*ing*.

Verses of this kind occur almost in every page; but, though

they are not unpleasing or dissonant, they ought not to be admitted into heroic poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epic and tragic measures, than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of the dramatic lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

No. 89. Tuesday, January 22, 1751.

Dulce est desipere in loco. Hor.

Wisdom at proper times is well forgot.

Locke, whom there is no reason to suspect of being a favourer of idleness or libertinism, has advanced, that whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigour, must allow some of it to pass in trifles. It is beyond the powers of humanity to spend a whole life in profound study and intense meditation, and the most rigorous exacters of industry and seriousness have appointed hours for relaxation and amusement.

It is certain, that, with or without our consent, many of the few moments allotted us will slide imperceptibly away, and that the mind will break, from confinement to its stated task, into sudden excursions. Severe and connected attention is preserved but for a short time; and when a man shuts himself up in his closet, and bends his thoughts to the discussion of any abstruse question, he will find his faculties continually stealing away to more pleasing entertainments. He often perceives himself transported, he knows not how, to distant tracts of thought, and returns to his first object as from a dream, without knowing when he forsook it, or how long he has been abstracted from it.

It has been observed that the most studious are not always the most learned. There is, indeed, no great difficulty in discovering that this difference of proficiency may arise from the difference of intellectual powers, of the choice of books, or the convenience of information. But I believe it likewise frequently happens that the most recluse are not the most vigorous prosecutors of study. Many impose upon the world, and many upon themselves, by an appearance of severe and exemplary diligence, when they, in reality, give themselves up to the luxury of fancy, please their minds with regulating

the past, or planning out the future; place themselves at will in various situations of happiness, and slumber away their days in voluntary visions. In the journey of life some are left behind, because they are naturally feeble and slow; some because they miss the way, many because they leave it by choice, and, instead of pressing onward with a steady pace, delight themselves with momentary deviations, turn aside to pluck every flower, and repose in every shade.

There is nothing more fatal to a man whose business is to think, than to have learned the art of regaling his mind with those airy gratifications. Other vices and follies are restrained by fear, reformed by admonition, or rejected by the conviction which the comparison of our conduct with that of others may in time produce. But this invisible riot of the mind this secret prodigality of being, is secure from detection, and fearless of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartments, shuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himself to his own fancy; new worlds rise up before him, one image is followed by another, and a long succession of delights dances round him. He is at last called back to life by nature, or by custom, and enters peevish into society, because he cannot model it to his own will. He returns from his idle excursions with the asperity, though not with the knowledge of a student, and hastens again to the same felicity with the eagerness of a man bent upon the advancement of some favourite science. The infatuation strengthens by degrees, and, like the poison of opiates, weakens his powers, without any external symptom of malignity.

It happens, indeed, that these hypocrites of learning are in time detected, and convinced by disgrace and disappointment of the difference between the labour of thought, and the sport of musing. But this discovery is not made till it is too late to recover the time that has been fooled away. A thousand accidents, may, indeed, awaken drones to a more early sense of their danger and their shame. But they who are convinced of the necessity of breaking from this habitual drowsiness, too often relapse in spite of their resolution: for these ideal seducers are always near, and neither any particularity of time nor place is necessary to their influence; they invade the soul without warning, and have often charmed down resistance before their approach is perceived or suspected.

This captivity, however, it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful, to pass his life with the esteem of others, or to look back with satisfaction from his old age upon his earlier years. In order to

regain liberty, he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the Stoic precepts, teach his desires to fix upon eternal things; he must adopt the joys and the pains of others, and excite in his mind the want of social pleasures and amicable communication.

It is, perhaps, not impossible to promote the cure of this mental malady, by close application to some new study, which may pour in fresh ideas, and keep curiosity in perpetual motion. But study requires solitude, and solitude is a state dangerous to those who are too much accustomed to sink into themselves. Active employment or public pleasure is generally a necessary part of this intellectual regimen, without which, though some remission may be obtained, a complete cure will scarcely be effected.

This is a formidable and obstinate disease of the intellect, of which, when it has once become radicated by time, the remedy is one of the hardest tasks of reason and of virtue. Its slightest attacks, therefore, should be watchfully opposed; and he that finds the frigid and narcotic infection beginning to seize him, should turn his whole attention against it, and check it at the first discovery by proper counteraction.

The great resolution to be formed, when happiness and virtue are thus formidably invaded, is, that no part of life be spent in a state of neutrality or indifference; but that some pleasure be found for every moment that is not devoted to labour; and that, whenever the necessary business of life grows irksome or disgusting, an immediate transition be made to diversion and gaiety.

After the exercises which the health of the body requires, and which have themselves a natural tendency to actuate and invigorate the mind, the most eligible amusement of a rational being seems to be that interchange of thoughts which is practised in free and easy conversation; where suspicion is banished by experience, and emulation by benevolence; where every man speaks with no other restraint than unwillingness to offend, and hears with no other disposition than desire to be pleased.

There must be a time in which every man trifles; and the only choice that nature offers us, is, to trifle in company or alone. To join profit with pleasure, has been an old precept among men who have had very different conceptions of profit. All have agreed that our amusements should not terminate wholly in the present moment, but contribute more or less to future advantage. He that amuses himself among well chosen companions, can scarcely fail to receive, from the most careless and obstreperous merriment which virtue can allow, some

useful hints; nor can converse on the most familiar topics, without some casual information. The loose sparkles of thoughtless wit may give new light to the mind, and the gay contention for paradoxical positions rectify the opinions.

This is the time in which those friendships that give happiness or consolation, relief or security, are generally formed. A wise and good man is never so amiable as in his unbended and familiar intervals. Heroic generosity, or philosophical discoveries, may compel veneration and respect, but love always implies some kind of natural or voluntary equality, and is only to be excited by that levity and cheerfulness which disencumber all minds from awe and solitude, invite the modest to freedom, and exalt the timorous to confidence. This easy gaiety is certain to please, whatever be the character of him that exerts it; if our superiors descend from their elevation, we love them for lessening the distance at which we are placed below them; and inferiors, from whom we can receive no lasting advantage, will always keep our affections while their sprightliness and mirth contribute to our pleasure.

Every man finds himself differently affected by the sight of fortresses of war, and palaces of pleasure; we look on the height and strength of the bulwarks with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, for we cannot think of defence without admitting images of danger; but we range delighted and jocund through the gay apartments of the palace, because nothing is impressed by them on the mind but joy and festivity. Such is the difference between great and amiable characters; with protectors we are safe, with companions we are happy.

No. 90. Saturday, January, 26, 1751.

In tenui labor. Ving.

What toil in slender things!

It is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to please or instruct. Too much nicety of detail disgusts the greatest part of readers, and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads, and lay down rules of extensive comprehensions, is to common understandings of little use. They who undertake these subjects are therefore always in danger, as one or other incon-

venience arises to their imagination, of frighting us with rugged science or amusing us with empty sound.

In criticising the work of Milton, there is, indeed, opportunity to intersperse passages that can hardly fail to relieve the languors of attention; and since, in examining the variety and choice of the pauses with which he has diversified his numbers, it will be necessary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found, perhaps the remarks may be well compensated by the examples, and the irksomeness of grammatical disquisitions somewhat alleviated.

Milton formed his scheme of versification by the poets of Greece and Rome, whom he proposed to himself for his models, so far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit the imitation. There are indeed many inconveniences inseparable from the heroic measure compared with that of Homer and Virgil; inconveniences, which it is no reproach to Milton not to have overcome, because they are in their own nature insuperable; but against which he has struggled with so much art and diligence, that he may at least be said to have deserved success.

The hexameter of the ancients may be considered as consisting of fifteen syllables, so melodiously disposed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleasing and sonorous lyric measures are formed from the fragments of the heroic. It is, indeed, scarce impossible to break them in such a manner but that *invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ*, some harmony will still remain, and the due proportions of sound will always be discovered. This measure therefore allowed great variety of pauses, and great liberties of connecting one verse with another, because wherever the line was interrupted, either part singly was musical. But the ancients seem to have confined this privilege to hexameters; for in their other measures, though longer than the English heroic, those who wrote after the refinements of versification, venture so seldom to change their pauses, that every variation may be supposed rather a compliance with necessity than the choice of judgment.

Milton was constrained within the narrow limits of a measure not very harmonious in the utmost perfection; the single parts, therefore, into which it was to be sometimes broken by pauses, were in danger of losing the very form of verse. This has, perhaps, notwithstanding all his care, sometimes happened.

As harmony is the end of poetical measures, no part of a verse ought to be so separated from the rest as not to remain still more harmonious than prose, or to show, by the disposi-

The noblest and most majestic pauses which our versification admits, are upon the fourth and sixth syllables, which are both strongly sounded in a pure and regular verse, and at either of which the line is so divided, that both members participate of harmony.

> But now at last the sacred influence
> Of light *appears*, and from the walls of heav'n
> Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
> A glimmering *dawn*: here nature first begins
> Her farthest verge, and chaos to retire.

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the rest upon the sixth syllable, which, taking in a complete compass of sound, such as is sufficient to constitute one of your lyric measures, makes a full and solemn close. Some passages which conclude at this stop, I could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration.

> Before the hills appear'd or fountain flow'd,
> Thou with the eternal wisdom didst converse,
> Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
> In presence of the almighty Father, pleas'd
> With thy celestial *song*.

> Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
> Like those *Hesperian* gardens fam'd of old,
> Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
> Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there,
> He staid not to *inquire*.

> ——He blew
> His trumpet, heard in *Oreb* since, perhaps
> When God descended; and perhaps, once more
> To sound at general *doom*.

If the poetry of Milton be examined, with regard to the pauses and flow of his verses into each other, it will appear, that he has performed all that our language would admit: and the comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing, will show that he excelled as much in the lower as the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning.

No. 91. Tuesday, January 29, 1751.

Dulcia inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit. Hor.

To court the great ones, and to sooth their pride,
Seems a sweet task to those that never tried;
But those that have know well that danger's near. Creech.

The Sciences having long seen their votaries labouring for the benefit of mankind without reward, put up their petition to Jupiter for a more equitable distribution of riches and honours. Jupiter was moved at their complaints, and touched with the approaching miseries of men, whom the Sciences, wearied with perpetual ingratitude, were now threatening to forsake, and who would have been reduced by their departure to feed in dens upon the masts of trees, to hunt their prey in deserts, and to perish under the paws of animals stronger and fiercer than themselves.

A synod of the celestials was therefore convened, in which it was resolved, that Patronage should descend to the assistance of the Sciences. Patronage was the daughter of Astrea, by a mortal father, and had been educated in the school of Truth, by the Goddesses, whom she was now appointed to protect. She had from her mother that dignity of aspect, which struck terrour into false merit, and from her mistress that reserve, which made her only accessible to those whom the Sciences brought into her presence.

She came down, with the general acclamation of all the powers that favour learning. Hope danced before her, and Liberality stood at her side, ready to scatter by her direction the gifts which Fortune, who followed her, was commanded to supply. As she advanced towards Parnassus, the cloud which had long hung over it, was immediately dispelled. The shades, before withered with drought, spread their original verdure, and the flowers that had languished with chilness brightened their colours, and invigorated their scents; the Muses tuned their harps and exerted their voices; and all the concert of nature welcomed her arrival.

On Parnassus she fixed her residence, in a palace raised by the Sciences, and adorned with whatever could delight the eye, elevate the imagination, or enlarge the understanding. Here she dispersed the gifts of Fortune with the impartiality of Justice, and the discernment of Truth. Her gate stood always open, and Hope sat at the portal, inviting to en-

trance, all whom the Sciences numbered in their train. The court was therefore thronged with innumerable multitudes, of whom, though many returned disappointed, seldom any had confidence to complain; for Patronage was known to neglect few, but for want of due claims to her regard. Those, therefore, who had solicited her favour without success, generally withdrew from public notice, and either diverted their attention to meaner employments, or endeavoured to supply their deficiencies by closer application.

In time, however, the number of those who had miscarried in their pretensions grew so great, that they became less ashamed of their repulses; and, instead of hiding their disgrace in retirement, began to besiege the gates of the palace, and obstruct the entrance of such as they thought likely to be more caressed. The decision of Patronage, who was but half a Goddess, had been sometimes erroneous; and though she always made haste to rectify her mistakes, a few instances of her fallibility encouraged every one to appeal from her judgment to his own and that of his companions, who are always ready to clamour in the common cause, and elate each other with reciprocal applause.

Hope was a steady friend to the disappointed, and Impudence incited them to accept a second invitation, and lay their claim again before Patronage. They were again, for the most part, sent back with ignominy, but found Hope not alienated, and Impudence more resolutely zealous; they therefore contrived new expedients, and hoped at last to prevail by their multitudes, which were always increasing, and their perseverence, which Hope and Impudence forbade them to relax.

Patronage having been long a stranger to the heavenly assemblies, began to degenerate towards terrestrial nature, and forgot the precepts of Justice and Truth. Instead of confining her friendship to the Sciences, she suffered herself, by little and little, to contract an acquaintance with Pride, the son of Falsehood, by whose embraces she had two daughters, Flattery and Caprice. Flattery was nursed by Liberality, and Caprice by Fortune, without any assistance from the lessons of the Sciences.

Patronage began openly to adopt the sentiments and imitate the manners of her husband, by whose opinions she now directed her decisions with very little heed to the precepts of Truth; and as her daughters continually gained upon her affections, the Sciences lost their influence, till none found much reason to boast of their reception, but those whom Caprice or Flattery conducted to her throne.

The throngs who had so long waited, and so often been dismissed for want of recommendation from the Sciences, were delighted to see the power of those rigorous Goddesses tending to its extinction. Their patronesses now renewed their encouragements. Hope smiled at the approach of Caprice, and Impudence was always at hand to introduce her clients to Flattery.

Patronage had now learned to procure herself reverence by ceremonies and formalities, and instead of admitting her petitioners to an immediate audience, ordered the ante-chamber to be erected, called among mortals, the Hall of Expectation. Into this hall the entrance was easy to those whom Impudence had consigned to Flattery, and it was therefore crowded with a promiscuous throng, assembled from every corner of the earth, pressing forward with the utmost eagerness of desire, and agitated with all the anxieties of competition.

They entered this general receptacle with ardour and alacrity, and made no doubt of speedy access, under the conduct of Flattery, to the presence of Patronage. But it generally happened that they were here left to their destiny, for the inner doors were committed to Caprice, who opened and shut them, as it seemed, by chance, and rejected or admitted without any settled rule of distinction. In the mean time, the miserable attendants were left to wear out their lives in alternate exultation and dejection, delivered up to the sport of Suspicion, who was always whispering into their ear designs against them which were never formed, and of Envy, who diligently pointed out the good fortune of one or other of their competitors. Infamy flew round the hall, and scattered mildews from her wings, with which every one was stained; Reputation followed her with slower flight, and endeavoured to hide the blemishes with paint, which was immediately brushed away, or separated of itself, and left the stains more visible; nor were the spots of Infamy ever effaced, but with limpid water effused by the hand of Time from a well which sprung up beneath the throne of Truth.

It frequently happened that Science, unwilling to lose the ancient prerogative of recommending to Patronage, would lead her followers into the Hall of Expectation; but they were soon discouraged from attending, for not only Envy and Suspicion incessantly tormented them, but Impudence considered them as intruders, and incited Infamy to blacken them. They therefore quickly retired, but seldom without some spots which they could scarcely wash away, and which showed that they had once waited in the Hall of Expectation.

The rest continued to expect the happy moment, at which Caprice should beckon them to approach; and endeavoured to propitiate her, not with Homerical harmony, the representation of great actions, or the recital of noble sentiments, but with soft and voluptuous melody, intermingled with the praises of Patronage and Pride, by whom they were heard at once with pleasure and contempt.

Some were indeed admitted by Caprice, when they least expected it, and heaped by Patronage with the gifts of Fortune; but they were from that time chained to her footstool, and condemned to regulate their lives by her glances and her nods; they seemed proud of their manacles, and seldom complained of any drudgery, however servile, or any affront, however contemptuous; yet they were often, notwithstanding their obedience, seized on a sudden by Caprice, divested of their ornaments, and thrust back into the Hall of Expectation.

Here they mingled again with the tumult, and all, except a few whom experience had taught to seek happiness in the regions of liberty, continued to spend hours, and days, and years, courting the smile of Caprice by the arts of Flattery; till at length new crowds pressed in upon them, and drove them forth at different outlets into the habitations of Disease, and Shame, and Poverty, and Despair, where they passed the rest of their lives in narratives of promises and breaches of faith, of joys and sorrows, of hopes and disappointments.

The Sciences, after a thousand indignities, retired from the palace of Patronage, and having long wandered over the world in grief and distress, were led at last to the cottage of Independence, the daughter of Fortitude; where they were taught by Prudence and Parsimony to support themselves in dignity and quiet.

No. 92. Saturday, February 2, 1751.

Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum
Perstringis aures, jam litui strepunt. Hor.

Lo! now the clarion's voice I hear,
Its threat'ning murmurs pierce mine ear,
And in thy lines with brazen breath
The trumpet sounds the charge of death. Francis.

It has been long observed, that the idea of beauty is vague and undefined, different in different minds, and diversified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto used to signify that which pleases us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can justify ourselves only by the concurrence of numbers, without much power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument, but example and authority. It is, indeed, so little subject to the examinations of reason, that Paschal supposes it to end where demonstration begins, and maintains, that without incongruity and absurdity we cannot speak of *geometrical beauty*.

To trace all the sources of that various pleasure which we ascribe to the agency of beauty, or to disentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would, perhaps, require a very great part of the life of Aristotle or Plato. It is, however, in many cases apparent that this quality is merely relative and comparative; that we pronounce things beautiful because they have something which we agree, for whatever reason, to call beauty, in a greater degree than we have been accustomed to find in it other things of the same kind; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge increases, and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind; and therefore Boileau justly remarks, that the books which have stood the test of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has suffered from the various revolutions of knowledge, and the prevalence of contrary customs, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boast, because the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.

It is, however, the task of criticism to establish principles; to improve opinion into knowledge: and to distinguish those means of pleasing which depend upon known causes and rational deduction, from the nameless and inexplicable elegan-

cies which appeal wholly to the fancy, from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantresses of the soul. Criticism reduces those regions of literature under the dominion of science, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prescription.

There is nothing in the art of versifying so much exposed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the sound to the sense, or the representation of particular images, by the flow of the verse in which they are expressed. Every student has innumerable passages, in which he, and perhaps he alone, discovers such resemblances; and since the attention of the present race of poetical readers seems particularly turned upon this species of elegance, I shall endeavour to examine how much these conformities have been observed by the poets, or directed by the critics, how far they can be established upon nature and reason, and on what occasions they have been practised by Milton.

Homer, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, as *he that of all the poets, exhibited the greatest variety of sound; for there are*, says he, *innumerable passages, in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of passion, and stillness of repose, or, in which, on the contrary, brevity, speed, and eagerness, are evidently marked out by the sound of the syllables. Thus the anguish and slow pace with which the blind* Polypheme *groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, are perceived in the cadence of the verses which describe it.*

> Κυκλωψ δὲ σπάχων τε καὶ ἀδίνων ὀδύνησι,
> Χερὶ ψηλαφόων———

> Mean time the *cyclop* raging with his wound,
> Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round.
>
> POPE.

The critic then proceeds to show, that the efforts of Achilles struggling in his armour against the current of a river, sometimes resisting and sometimes yielding, may be perceived in the elisions of the sylables, the slow succession of the feet, and the strength of the consonants.

> Δεινὸν δ' ἀμφ' Ἀχιλῆα κυκώμενον ἵστατο κῦμα
> Ὤθει δ' ἐν στάχυϊ πιπτῶν ῥοῷ· αὐὶ δὲ ποδοῖν
> Ἔσπα στηρίξασθαι.———

> So oft the surge, in wat'ry mountains spread,
> Beats on his back, or bursts upon his head,

Yet, dauntless still, the adverse flood he braves,
And still indignant bounds above the waves.
Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil;
Wash'd from beneath him, slides the slimy soil. POPE.

When Homer describes the crush of men dashed against a rock, he collects the most unpleasing and harsh sounds.

Τον δὲ δύω μαςψας ὥστε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαιῃ
Κόπτ'· ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμαδὶς ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.

——— His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor:
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.
POPE.

And when he would place before the eyes something dreadful and astonishing, he makes choice of the strongest vowels, and the letters of most difficult utterance.

Τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργω βλοσυρῶπις ἐςεφάνωτο
Δεινον δερκομένη· περὶ δὲ Δείμος τε Φόβος τε.

Tremendous *Gorgon* frown'd upon its field,
And circling terrors fill'd th' expressive shield. POPE.

Many other examples Dionysius produces; but these will sufficiently show, that either he was fanciful, or we have lost the genuine pronunciation; for I know not whether, in any one of these instances, such similitude can be discovered. It seems, indeed, probable, that the veneration with which Homer was read produced many suppositious beauties: for it is certain, that the sound of many of his verses very justly corresponds with the things expressed, yet, when the force of his imagination, which gave him full possession of every object, is considered, together with the flexibility of his language, of which the syllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleasure, it will seem unlikely that such conformity should happen less frequently even without design.

It is not however to be doubted, that Virgil, who wrote amidst the light of criticism, and who owed so much of his success to art and labour, endeavoured, among other excellencies, to exhibit this similitude; nor has he been less happy in this than in the other graces of versification. This felicity of his numbers was, at the revival of learning, displayed with great elegance by Vida, in his Art of Poetry.

Haud satis est illis utcunque claudere versum.——
Omnia sed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,
Atque sono quæcunque canunt imitantur, & apta
Verborum facie, & quæsito carminis ore.
Nam Diversa opus est veluti dare versibus ora,——
Hic melior motuque pedum & pernicibus alis,
Molle viam tacito lapsu per levia radit:
Ille autem membris, ac mole ignavius ingens
Incedit, tardo molimine subsidendo
Ecce aliquis subit egregio pulcherrimus ore,
Cui lætum membris Venus omnibus afflat honorem,
Contra alius rudis, informes ostendit & artus,
Hirsutumque supercilium, ac caudam sinuosam,
Ingratus visu, sonitu ille tabilis ipso———
Ergo ubi jam nautæ spumas salis aere ruentes
Incubuere mari, videas spumare, reductis
Convulsum remis, rostrisque stridentibus aequor.
Tunc longe sale saxa sonant, tunc & freta ventis
Incipiunt agitata tumescere; littore fluctus
Illidunt rauco, atque refracta remurmurat unda
Ad scopulos, cumulo insequitur praeruptus, aquae mons.—
Cum vero ex alto speculatus caerula Nereus
Leniit in morem stagni, placidaeque paludis,
Labita uncta vadis abies, natat uncta carina———
Verba etiam res exiguas angusta sequuntur,
Ingentesque juvant ingentia: cuncta gigantem
Vasta decent, vultus immanes, pectora lata,
Et magni membrorum artus, magna ossa lacertique.
Atque adeo, siquid geritur molimina magno,
Adde moram, & paritur tecum, quoque verba laborent
Segnia: seu quando vi multa gleba conctis
Æternum frangenda bidentibus, aequore seu cum
Cornua velatarum abvertimus antennarum.
At mora si fuerit damno, properare jubebo.
Si se forte cava extulerit, mala vipera terra,
Tole moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, pastor,
Ferte citi flammas, date tela, repellite pestem.
Ipse etiam versus ruat, in praecepsque feratur,
Immenso cum praecipitans ruit Oceano nox,
Aut cum perculsus graviter procumbit humi bos,
Cunque etiam requies rebus datur, ipsa quoque ultro
Camina paulisper cursu cessare videbis
In medio interrupta; quierunt cum freta ponti,
Postquam aurae posuere, quiescere protinus ipsum
Cernere eret, mediisque inceptis sistere versum.
Quid dicam, senior cum telum imbelle sine ictu
Invalidus jacit, & defectis viribus æger?
Num quoque tum versus segni pariter pede languet:
Sanguis hebet, frigent effetae in corpore vires
Fortem autem juvenem deceat prorumpere in arces,
Evertisse domos, praefractaque quadrupedantum
Pectora pectoribus perrumpere, sternere turres
Ingentes, totoque ferum dare funera campo.

'Tis not enough his verses to complete.
In measure, number, or determin'd feet.
To all proportion'd terms he must dispense,
And make the sound a picture of the sense;

The correspondent words exactly frame,
The look, the features, and the mien the same.
With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away;
This blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
And Venus breathes on ev'ry limb a grace;
That, of rude form, his uncouth members shows,
Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows;
His monstrous tail, in many a fold and wind,
Voluminous and vast curls up behind;
At once the image and the lines appear
Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.
Lo! when the sailors steer the pond'rous ships,
And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps,
Incumbent on the main that roars around,
Beneath the lab'ring oars the waves resound;
The prows wide echoing thro' the dark profound.
To the loud call each distant rock replies;
Tossed by the storm the tow'ring surges rise;
While the hoarse ocean beats the sounding shore,
Dash'd from the strand, the flying waters roar.
Flash at the shock, and gathering in a heap,
The liquid mountains rise, and over-hang the deep.
But when blue Neptune from his car surveys,
And calms at one regard the raging seas,
Stretch'd like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,
And the pitch'd vessel o'er the surface glides.
When things are small the terms should still be so;
For low words please us when the theme is low,
But when some giant, horrible and grim,
Enormous in his gait, and vast in ev'ry limb,
Stalks tow'ring on; the swelling words must raise
In just proportion to the monster's size.
If some large weight his huge arms strive to shove,
The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move,
When each stiff clod beneath the pon'drous plough
Crumbles and breaks, th' encumber'd lines must flow.
Nor less when pilots catch the friendly gales,
Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the wide-stretch'd sails
But if the poem suffers from delay,
Let the lines fly precipitate away,
And when the viper issues from the brake,
Be quick, with stones, and brands, and fire attack
His rising crest, and drive the serpent back.
When night descends, or stunn'd by num'rous strokes,
And groaning, to the earth drops the vast ox;
The line too sinks with correspondent sound,
Flat with the steer, and headlong to the ground.
When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,
And hush the rearings of the sea to peace;
So oft we see the interrupted strain
Stopp'd in the midst—and with the silent main
Pause for a space— at last it glides again.
When Priam strains his aged arms to throw
His unavailing jav'line at the foe;
(His blood congeal'd, and ev'ry nerve unstrung)
Then with the theme complies the artful song,
Like him the solitary numbers flow,

Weak, trembling, melancholy, stiff, and slow.
Not so young Pyrrhus, who with rapid force
Beats down embattled armies in his course.
The raging youth on trembling Ilion falls,
Burns her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls;
Provokes his flying courser to the speed,
In full career to charge the warlike steed:
He piles the field with mountains of the slain;
He pours, he storms, he thunders thro' the plain. PITT.

From the Italian gardens Pope seems to have transplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a soil less adapted to its nature, and less favourable to its increase.

Soft is the strain, when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud billows lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow:
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.

From these lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected from the most diligent endeavours after this imagery of sound. The verse intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility: and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed, distinctly imaged, for it requires very little skill to make our language rough: but in those lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction or delay. The swiftness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified; why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they, therefore, naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules and these examples have taught our present critics to inquire very studiously and minutely into sounds and cadences. It is, therefore, useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded; what discoveries they have made; and whether any rules can be established which may guide us hereafter in such researches.

No. 93. Tuesday, February 5, 1751.

——Experiar quid concedatur in illos
Quorum flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina. Juv.

More safely truth to urge her claim presumes,
On names new found alone on books and tombs.

There are few books on which more time is spent by young students, than on treatises which deliver the characters of authors; nor any which oftener deceive the expectation of the reader, or fill his mind with more opinions which the progress of his studies and the increase of his knowledge oblige him to resign.

Baillet has introduced his collection of the decisions of the learned, by an enumeration of the prejudices which mislead the critic, and raise the passions in rebellion against the judgment. His catalogue, though large is imperfect; and who can hope to complete it? The beauties of writing have been observed to be often such as cannot in the present state of human knowledge be evinced by evidence, or drawn out into demonstrations; they are therefore wholly subject to the imagination, and do not force their effects upon a mind pre-occupied by unfavourable sentiments, nor overcome the counter-action of a false principle, or of stubborn partiality.

To convince any man against his will is hard, but to please him against his will, is justly pronounced by Dryden, to be above the reach of human abilities. Interest and passion will hold out long against the closest siege of diagrams and syllogisms, but they are absolutely impregnable to imagery and sentiment; and will for ever bid defiance to the most powerful strains of Virgil or Homer, though they may give way in time to the batteries of Euclid or Archimedes.

In trusting therefore to the sentence of a critic, we are in danger not only from that vanity which exalts writers too often to the dignity of teaching what they are yet to learn, from that negligence which sometimes steals upon the most vigilant caution, and that fallibility to which the condition of nature has subjected every human understanding; but from a thousand extrinsic and accidental causes, from every thing which can excite kindness or malevolence, veneration or contempt.

Many of those who have determined with great boldness upon the various degrees of literary merit, may be justly

suspected of having passed sentence, as Seneca remarks, of Claudius,

> *Una tantum parte audita,*
> *Sæpe et nulla,*

without much knowledge of the cause before them: for it will not easily be imagined of Langbaine, Borrichius, or Rapin, that they had very accurately perused all the books which they praise or censure; or that, even if nature and learning had qualified them for judges, they could read for ever with the attention necessary to just criticism. Such performances, however, are not wholly without their use: for they are commonly just echoes to the voice of fame, and transmit the general suffrage of mankind when they have no particular motives to suppress it.

Critics, like the rest of mankind, are very frequently misled by interest. The bigotry with which editors regard the authors whom they illustrate or correct, has been generally remarked. Dryden was known to have written most of his critical dissertations only to recommend the work upon which he then happened to be employed; and Addison is suspected to have denied the expediency of poetical justice, because his own Cato was condemned to perish in a good cause.

There are prejudices which authors, not otherwise weak or corrupt, have indulged without scruple; and perhaps some of them are so complicated with our natural affections, that they cannot easily be disentangled from the heart. Scarce any can hear with impartiality a comparison between the writers of his own and another country; and though it cannot, I think, be charged equally on all nations, that they are blinded with this literary patriotism, yet there are none that do not look upon their authors with the fondness of affinity, and esteem them as well for the place of their birth, as for their knowledge or their wit. There is, therefore, seldom much respect due to comparative criticism, when the competitors are of different countries, unless the judge is of a nation equally indifferent to both. The Italians could not for a long time believe, that there was any learning beyond the mountains; and the French seem generally persuaded, that there are no wits or reasoners equal to their own. I can scarcely conceive that if Scaliger had not considered himself as allied to Virgil, by being born in the same country, he would have found his works so much superior to those of Homer, or have thought the controversy worthy of so much zeal, vehemence, and acrimony.

There is, indeed, one prejudice, and only one, by which it may be doubted whether it is any dishonour to be sometimes misguided. Criticism has so often given occasion to the envious and ill-natured of gratifying their malignity, that some have thought it necessary to recommend the virtue of candour without restriction, and to preclude all future liberty of censure. Writers possessed with this opinion are continually enforcing civility and decency, recommending to critics the proper diffidence of themselves, and inculcating the veneration due to celebrated names.

I am not of opinion that these professed enemies of arrogance and severity have much more benevolence or modesty than the rest of mankind; or that they feel in their own hearts any other intention than to distinguish themselves by their softness and delicacy. Some are modest because they are timorous, and some are lavish of praise because they hope to be repaid.

There is indeed some tenderness due to living writers, when they attack none of those truths which are of importance to the happiness of mankind, and have committed no other offence than that of betraying their own ignorance or dulness. I should think it cruelty to crush an insect who had provoked me only by buzzing in my ear; and would not willingly interrupt the dream of harmless stupidity, or destroy the jest which makes its author laugh. Yet I am far from thinking this tenderness universally necessary; for he that writes may be considered as a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack; since he quits the common rank of life, steps forward beyond the lists, and offers his merit to the public judgment. To commence author is to claim praise, and no man can justly aspire to honour, but at the hazard of disgrace.

But whatever be decided concerning contemporaries whom he that knows the treachery of the human heart, and considers how often we gratify our own pride or envy under the appearance of contending for elegance and propriety, will find himself not much inclined to disturb; there can surely be no exemptions pleaded to secure them from criticism, who can no longer suffer by reproach, and of whom nothing now remains but their writings and their names. Upon these authors the critic is undoubtedly at full liberty to exercise the strictest severity, since he endangers only his own fame, and like Æneas when he drew his sword in the infernal regions, encounters phantoms which cannot be wounded. He may indeed pay some regard to established reputation; but he can

by that show of reverence consult only his own security, for all other motives are now at an end.

The faults of a writer of acknowledged excellence are more dangerous, because the influence of his example is more extensive; and the interest of learning requires that they should be discovered and stigmatized, before they have the sanction of antiquity conferred upon them, and become precedents of indisputable authority.

It has, indeed, been advanced by Addison, as one of the characteristics of a true critic, that he points out beauties rather than faults. But it is rather natural to a man of learning and genius to apply himself chiefly to the study of writers who have more beauties than faults to be displayed: for the duty of criticism is neither to depreciate, nor dignify by partial representations, but to hold out the light of reason, whatever it may discover; and to promulgate the determinations of truth, whatever she shall dictate.

No. 94. Saturday, February 9, 1751.

——Bonus atque fidus
Judex—per obstantes catervas
Explecuit sua victor arma. Hor.

Perpetual magistrate is he
Who keeps strict justice full in sight;
Who bids the crowd at awful distance gaze,
And virtue's arms victoriously displays. Francis.

The resemblance of poetic numbers to the subject which they mention or describe, may be considered as general or particular; as consisting in the flow and structure of a whole passage taken together, or as comprised in the sound of some emphatical and descriptive words, or in the cadence and harmony of single verses.

The general resemblance of the sound to the sense is to be found in every language which admits of poetry, in every author whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind, and whose choice and variety of language readily supply him with just representations. To such a writer it is natural to change his measure with his subject, even without any effort of the understanding, or intervention of the judgment. To revolve jollity and mirth necessarily tunes the voice of a poet to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his eye with vivacity; and reflection on

gloomy situations and disastrous events, will sadden his numbers as it will cloud his countenance. But in such passages there is only the similitude of pleasure to pleasure, and of grief to grief, without any immediate application to particular images. The same flow of joyous versification will celebrate the jollity of marriage, and the exultation of triumph: and the same languor of melody will suit the complaints of an absent lover, as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that on many occasions we make the music which we imagine ourselves to hear, that we modulate the poem by our own disposition, and ascribe to the numbers the effects of the sense. We may observe in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasing message in an unpleasing manner, and that we readily associate beauty and deformity with those whom for any reason we love or hate. Yet it would be too daring to declare that all the celebrated adaptions of harmony are chimerical, that Homer had no extraordinary attention to the melody of his verse when he described a nuptial festivity;

> Νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δαΐδων ὑπολαμπομενάων,
> Ηγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄστυ, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει;
>
> Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight,
> And solemn dance, and hymeneal rite;
> Along the street the new-made brides are led,
> With torches flaming, to the nuptial bed;
> The youthful dancers in a circle bound
> To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound. POPE.

that Vida was merely fanciful, when he supposed Virgil endeavouring to represent by uncommon sweetness of numbers the adventitious beauty of Æneas:

> *Os, humerosque Deo similis: namque ipse decoram*
> *Cæsariem nato genetrix, lumenque juventæ*
> *Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflarat honores;*
>
> The Trojan chief appear'd in open sight,
> August in visage, and serenly bright,
> His mother goddess, with her hands divine,
> Had form'd his curling locks, and made his temples shine;
> And giv'n his rolling eys a sparkling grace,
> And breath'd a youthful vigour on his face. DRYDEN

or that Milton did not intend to exemplify the harmony which he mentions:

> Fountains! and ye that warble as ye flow,
> Melodious murmurs! warbling tune his praise.

That Milton understood the force of sounds well adjusted, and knew the compass and variety of the ancient measures, cannot be doubted; since he was both a musician and a critic; but he seems to have considered these conformities of cadence, as either not often attainable in our language, or as petty excellencies unworthy of his ambition: for it will not be found that he has always assigned the same cast of numbers to the same object. He has given in two passages very minute descriptions of angelic beauty; but though the images are nearly the same, the numbers will be found upon comparison very different:

> And now a stripling cherub he appears,
> Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
> Youth smil'd celestial, and to ev'ry limb
> *Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd;*
> Under a coronet his flowing hair
> *In curls on either cheek play'd: wings he wore*
> *Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold.*

Some of the lines of this description are remarkably defective in harmony, and therefore by no means correspondent with that symmetrical elegance and easy grace which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, however, is fully compensated by the representation of Raphael, which equally delights the ear and imagination:

> A seraph wing'd: six wings he wore to shade
> His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
> Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
> With regal ornament: the middle pair
> Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
> Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold,
> And colours dipp'd in heav'n: the third his feet
> Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
> Sky-tinctur'd grain! like Maia's son he stood,
> And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
> The circuit wide.———

The adumbration of particular and distinct images by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound, is sometimes studied, and sometimes casual. Every language has many words formed in imitation of the noises which they signify. Such are Stridor, Balo, and Beatus, in Latin; and in English to growl, to buzz, to hiss, and to jar. Words of this kind give to a verse the proper similitude of sound, without much labour of the writer, and such happiness is therefore to be attributed rather to fortune than skill; yet they are sometimes combined with great propriety, and undeniably contri-

bute to enforce the impression of the idea. We hear the passing arrow in this line of Virgil;

> Et fugit *horrendum stridens* elapsa sagitta;
>
> Th' impetuous arrow whizzes on the wing. Pope.

And the creeking of hell-gates, in the description by Milton;

> ——Open fly
> With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
> Th' infernal doors; and on their hinges grate
> Harsh thunder.

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns, and perhaps the ancients, have observed, seem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. Dionysius himself tells us, that the sound of Homer's verses sometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk: is not this a discovery nearly approaching to that of the blind man, who, after long inquiry into the nature of the scarlet colour, found that it represented nothing so much as the clangour of a trumpet? The representative power of poetic harmony consists of sound and measure; of the force of the syllables singly considered, and of the time in which they are pronounced. Sound can resemble nothing but sound, and time can measure nothing but motion and duration.

The critics, however, have struck out other similitudes; nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot discover to be eminently beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of these lines has been celebrated by writers whose opinion the world has reason to regard:

> *Vertitur interea cælum, et ruit oceano nox.*——
>
> Meantime the rapid heav'ns rowl'd down the light,
> And on the shaded ocean rush'd the night. Dryden.
>
> *Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos.*——
>
> Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound;
> But sprawls in pangs of death, and spurns the ground. Dryden.
>
> *Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.*
>
> The mountains labour, and a mouse is born. Roscommon.

If all these observations are just, there must be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a

mouse from a mountain; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly impressed by the same form and termination of the verse.

We may, however, without giving way to enthusiasm, admit that some beauties of this kind may be produced. A sudden stop at an unusual syllable may image the cessation of action, or the pause of discourse; and Milton has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo:

> ——I fled, and cried out *death*:
> Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
> From all her caves, and back resounded *death*.

The measure of time in pronouncing may be varied so as very strongly to represent, not only the modes of external motion, but the quick or slow succession of ideas, and consequently the passions of the mind. This at least was the power of the spondaic and dactylic harmony, but our language can reach no eminent diversities of sound. We can indeed sometimes, by encumbering and retarding the line, show the difficulty of a progress made by strong efforts and with frequent interruptions, or mark a slow and heavy motion. Thus Milton has imaged the toil of Satan struggling through chaos;

> So he with difficulty and labour hard
> Mov'd on: with difficulty and labour he—

thus he has described the leviathans or whales;

> Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait.

But he has at other times neglected such representations, as may be observed in the volubility and levity of these lines, which express an action tardy and reluctant.

> ——Descent and fall
> To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
> When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
> Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
> With what confusion and laborious flight
> We sunk thus low! Th' ascent is easy then.

In another place, he describes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting;

> ——Tripping ebb; that stole
> With soft foot tow'rds the deep who now had stopp'd
> His sluices.

It is not, indeed, to be expected, that the sound should always assist the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it; and therefore Milton has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he implored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addressed the earth.

Those who are determined to find in Milton an assemblage of all the excellencies which have ennobled all other poets, will perhaps be offended that I do not celebrate his versification in higher terms; for there are readers who discover that in this passage,

> So stretch'd out huge in length the arch fiend lay.

a *long* form is described in a *long* line; but the truth is, that length of body is only mentioned in a *slow* line, to which it has only the resemblance of time to space, of an hour to a maypole.

The same turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the description of the ark:

> Then from the mountains hewing timber tall,
> Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
> Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and height.

In these lines the poet apparently designs to fix the attention upon bulk; but this is effected by the enumeration, not by the measure; for what analogy can there be between modulations of sound, and corporeal dimensions?

Milton indeed seems only to have regarded this species of embellishment so far as not to reject it when it came unsought; which would often happen to a mind so vigorous, employed upon a subject so various and extensive. He had, indeed, a greater and a nobler work to perform; a single sentiment of moral or religious truth, a single image of life or nature, would have been cheaply lost for a thousand echoes of the cadence to the sense; and he who had undertaken to *vindicate the ways of God to man*. might have been accused of neglecting his cause, had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds.

No. 95. Tuesday, February 12, 1751.

Parcus Deorum cultor, et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro; nunc retrorsum
Vela dare atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos. Hor.

A fugitive from heav'n and prayer,
I mock'd at all religious fear,
Deep scienc'd in the mazy lore
Of mad philosophy; but now
Hoist sail, and back by voyage plough
To that blest harbour, which I left before. Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—There are many diseases both of the body and mind, which it is far easier to prevent than to cure, and therefore I hope you will think me employed in an office not useless either to learning or virtue, if I describe the symptoms of an intellectual malady, which, though at first it seizes only the passions, will, if not speedily remedied, infect the reason, and, from blasting the blossoms of knowledge, proceed in time to canker the root.

I was born in the house of discord. My parents were of unsuitable ages, contrary tempers, and different religions, and therefore employed the spirit and acuteness which nature had very liberally bestowed upon both, in hourly disputes, and incessant contrivances to detect each other in the wrong: so that from the first exertions of reason I was bred a disputant, trained up in all the arts of domestic sophistry, initiated in a thousand low stratagems, nimble shifts, and sly concealments; versed in all the turns of altercation, and acquainted with the whole discipline of *fending* and *proving*.

It was necessarily my care to preserve the kindness of both the controvertists, and therefore I had very early formed the habit of suspending my judgment, of hearing arguments with indifference, inclining as occasion required to either side, and of holding myself undetermined between them till I knew for what opinion I might conveniently declare.

Thus, sir, I acquired very early the skill of disputation: and, as we naturally love the arts in which we believe ourselves to excel, I did not let my abilities lie useless, nor suffer my dexterity to be lost for want of practice. I engaged in

perpetual wrangles with my school-fellows, and was never to be convinced or repressed by any other arguments than blows, by which my antagonists commonly determined the controversy, as I was, like the Roman orator, much more eminent for eloquence than courage.

At the university I found my predominant ambition completely gratified by the study of logic. I impressed upon my memory a thousand axioms, and ten thousand distinctions, practised every form of syllogism, passed all my days in the schools of disputation, and slept every night with Smiglecius* on my pillow.

You will not doubt but such a genius was soon raised to eminence by such application: I was celebrated in my third year for the most artful opponent that the university could boast, and became the terrour and envy of all the candidates for philosophical reputation.

My renown, indeed, was not purchased but at the price of all my time and all my studies. I never spoke but to contradict, nor declaimed but in defence of a position universally acknowledged to be false, and therefore worthy, in my opinion, to be adorned with all the colours of false representation, and strengthened with all the art of fallacious subtilty.

My father, who had no other wish than to see his son richer than himself, easily concluded that I should distinguish myself among the professors of the law; and therefore, when I had taken my first degree, despatched me to the Temple with a paternal admonition, that I should never suffer myself to feel shame, for nothing but modesty could retard my fortune.

Vitiated, ignorant, and heady as I was, I had not yet lost my reverence for virtue, and therefore could not receive such dictates without horrour; but, however, was pleased with his determination of my course of life, because he placed me in the way that leads soonest from the prescribed waks of discipline and education, to the open fields of liberty and choice.

I was now in the place where every one catches the contagion of vanity, and soon began to distinguish myself by sophisms and paradoxes. I declared war against all received opinions and established rules, and levelled my batteries particularly against those universal principles which had stood unshaken in all the vicissitudes of literature, and are considered as the inviolable temples of truth, or the impregnable bulwarks of science.

* A Polish writer, whose "Logic" was formerly held in great estimation in this country, as well as on the continent. C.

I applied myself chiefly to those parts of learning which have filled the world with doubt and perplexity, and could readily produce all the arguments relating to matter and motion, time and space, identity and infinity.

I was equally able and equally willing to maintain the system of Newton or Descartes, and favoured occasionally the hypothesis of Ptolemy, or that of Copernicus. I sometimes exalted vegetables to sense, and sometimes degraded animals to mechanism.

Nor was I less inclined to weaken the credit of history, or perplex the doctrines of polity. I was always of the party which I heard the company condemn.

Among the zealots of liberty I could harangue with great copiousness upon the advantages of absolute monarchy, the secrecy of its counsels, and the expedition of its measures; and often celebrated the blessings produced by the extinction of parties, and preclusion of debates.

Among the assertors of regal authority, I never failed to declaim with republican warmth upon the original charter of universal liberty, the corruption of courts, and the folly of voluntary submission to those whom nature has levelled with ourselves.

I knew the defects of every scheme of government, and the inconveniences of every law. I sometimes showed how much the condition of mankind would be improved, by breaking the world into petty sovereignties, and sometimes displayed the felicity and peace which universal monarchy would diffuse over the earth.

To every acknowledged fact I found innumerable objections: for it was my rule, to judge of history only by abstracted probability, and therefore I made no scruple of bidding defiance to testimony. I have more than once questioned the existence of Alexander the Great; and having demonstrated the folly of erecting edifices like the pyramids of Egypt, I frequently hinted my suspicion that the world had been long deceived, and that they were to be found only in the narratives of travellers.

It had been happy for me could I have confined my scepticism to historical controversies, and philosophical disquisitions; but having now violated my reason, and accustomed myself to inquire not after proofs, but objections, I had perplexed truth with falsehood, till my ideas were confused, my judgment embarrassed, and my intellects distorted. The habit of considering every proposition as alike uncertain, left me no test by which any tenet could be tried; every opinion presented both sides with equal evidence, and my fallacies

began to operate upon my own mind in more important inquiries. It was at last the sport of my vanity to weaken the obligations of moral duty, and efface the distinctions of good and evil, till I had deadened the sense of conviction, and abandoned my heart to the fluctuations of uncertainty, without anchor and without compass, without satisfaction of curiosity, or peace of conscience, without principles of reason, or motives of action.

Such is the hazard of repressing the first perceptions of truth, of spreading for diversion the snares of sophistry, and engaging reason against its own determinations.

The disproportions of absurdity grow less and less visible, as we are reconciled by degrees to the deformity of a mistress; and falsehood, by long use, is assimilated to the mind, as poison to the body.

I had soon the mortification of seeing my conversation courted only by the ignorant or wicked, by either boys who were enchanted by novelty, or wretches, who having long disobeyed virtue and reason, were now desirous of my assistance to dethrone them.

Thus alarmed, I shuddered at my own corruption, and that pride by which I had been seduced, contributed to reclaim me. I was weary of continual irresolution, and a perpetual equipoise of the mind; and ashamed of being the favourite of those who were scorned and shunned by the rest of mankind.

I therefore retired from all temptation to dispute, prescribed a new regimen to my understanding, and resolved, instead of rejecting all established opinions which I could not prove, to tolerate though not adopt all which I could not confute. I forebore to heat my imagination with needless controversies, to discuss questions confessedly uncertain, and refrained steadily from gratifying my vanity by the support of falsehood.

By this method I am at length recovered from my argumental delirium, and find myself in the state of one awakened from the confusion and tumult of a feverish dream. I rejoice in the new possession of evidence and reality, and step on from truth to truth with confidence and quiet.

I am, Sir, &c.

PERTINAX.

No. 96. Saturday, February 16, 1751.

Quod si Platonis *musa personat verum,*
Quod quisque discit, immemor recordatur. Boetius.

Truth in Platonic ornaments bedeck'd
Inforc'd we love, unheeding recollect.

It is reported of the Persians, by an ancient writer, that the sum of their education consisted in teaching youth *to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth.*

The bow and the horse were easily mastered, but it would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what preservatives a Persian mind was secured against the temptations to falsehood.

There are, indeed, in the present corruption of mankind, many incitements to forsake truth; the need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of imposing on the ignorance or credulity of others, so frequently occur; so many immediate evils are to be avoided, and so many present gratifications obtained, by craft and delusion, that very few of those who are much entangled in life, have spirit and constancy sufficient to support them in the steady practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to speak truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it; for no species of falsehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant by interest, and the friend by tenderness. Those who are neither servile nor timorous, are yet desirous to bestow pleasure; and while unjust demands of praise continue to be made, there will always be some whom hope, fear, or kindness, will dispose to pay them.

The guilt of falsehood is very widely extended, and many whom their conscience can scarcely charge with stooping to a lie, have vitiated the morals of others by their vanity, and patronized the vice which they believe themselves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for its own sake; it is generally unpleasing, because contrary to our wishes and opposite to our practice; and as our attention naturally follows our interest, we hear unwillingly what we are afraid to know, and soon forget what we have no inclination to impress upon our memories.

For this reason many arts of instruction have been invented, by which the reluctance against truth may be overcome;

and as physic is given to children in confections, precepts have been hidden under a thousand appearances. that mankind may be bribed by pleasure to escape destruction.

While the world was yet in its infancy, Truth came among mortals from above, and Falsehood from below. Truth was the daughter of Jupiter and Wisdom; Falsehood was the progeny of Folly impregnated by the wind. They advanced with equal confidence to seize the dominion of the new creation; and, as their enmity and their force were well known to the celestials, all the eyes of heaven were turned upon the contest.

Truth seemed conscious of superior power and juster claim, and therefore came on towering and majestic, unassisted and alone; Reason indeed always attended her, but appeared her follower, rather than companion. Her march was slow and stately, but her motion was perpetually progressive, and when once she had grounded her foot, neither gods nor men could force her to retire.

Falsehood always endeavoured to copy the mien and attitudes of Truth, and was very successful in the arts of mimicry. She was surrounded, animated, and supported by innumerable legions of appetites and passions, but, like other feeble commanders, was obliged often to receive law from her allies. Her motions were sudden, irregular, and violent; for she had no steadiness nor constancy. She often gained conquests by hasty incursions. which she never hoped to keep by her own strength, but maintained by the help of the passions, whom she generally found resolute and faithful.

It sometimes happened that the antagonists met in full opposition. In these encounters, Falsehood always invested her head with clouds, and commanded Fraud to place ambushes about her. In her left hand she bore the shield of Impudence, and the quiver of Sophistry rattled on her shoulder. All the passions attended at her call; Vanity clapped her wings before, and Obstinacy supported her behind. Thus guarded and assisted, she sometimes advanced against Truth, and sometimes waited the attack; but always endeavoured to skirmish at a distance, perpetually shifted her ground, and let fly her arrows in different directions; for she certainly found that her strength failed, whenever the eye of Truth darted full upon her.

Truth had the awful aspect, though not the thunder of her father, and when the long continuance of the contest brought them near to one another, Falsehood let the arms of Sophistry fall from her grasp, and holding up the shield of Impudence with both her hands, sheltered herself amongst the passions.

Truth, though she was often wounded, always recovered in a short time; but it was common for the slightest hurt, received by Falsehood, to spread its malignity to the neighbouring parts, and to burst open again when it seemed to have been cured.

Falsehood, in a short time, found by experience that her superiority consisted only in the celerity of her course, and the changes of her posture. She therefore ordered Suspicion to beat the ground before her, and avoided with great care to cross the way of Truth, who, as she never varied her point, but moved constantly upon the same line, was easily escaped by the oblique and desultory movements, the quick retreats, and active doubles which Falsehood always practised when the enemy began to raise terrour by her approach.

By this procedure Falsehood every hour encroached upon the world, and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever she carried her victories, she left the Passions in full authority behind her; who were so well pleased with command, that they held out with great obstinacy when Truth came to seize their posts, and never failed to retard her progress, though they could not always stop it: they yielded at last with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and sullen submission; and always inclined to revolt when Truth ceased to awe them by her immediate presence.

Truth, who, when she first descended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by universal acclamation, cherished with kindness, heard with obedience, and invited to spread her influence from province to province, now found, that wherever she came, she must force her passage. Every intellect was precluded by Prejudice, and every heart preoccupied by passsion. She indeed advanced, but she advanced slowly; and often lost the conquests which she left behind her, by sudden insurrections of the appetites, that shook off their allegiance, and ranged themselves again under the banner of her enemy.

Truth, however, did not grow weaker by the struggle, for her vigour was unconquerable: yet she was provoked to see herself thus baffled and impeded by an enemy, whom she looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but such as she owed to inconstancy, weakness, and artifice. She, therefore, in the anger of disappointment, called upon her father Jupiter to re-establish her in the skies, and leave mankind to the disorder and misery which they deserved by submitting willingly to the usurpation of Falsehood.

Jupiter compassionated the world too much to grant her request, yet was willing to ease her labours and mitigate her

vexation. He commanded her to consult the muses by what methods she might obtain an easier reception, and reign without the toil of incessant war. It was then discovered, that she obstructed her own progress by the severity of her aspect, and the solemity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her, till they ceased to fear her, since, by giving themselves up to Falsehood, they seldom made any sacrifice of their ease or pleasure, because she took the shape that was most engaging, and always suffered herself to be dressed and painted by Desire. The muses wove, in the loom of Pallas, a loose and changeable robe, like that in which Falsehood captivated her admirers; with this they invested Truth, and named her Fiction. She now went out again to conquer with more success; for when she demanded entrance of the Passions, they often mistook her for Falsehood, and delivered up their charge; but when she had once taken possession, she was soon disrobed by Reason, and shone out in her original form, with native effulgence and resistless dignity.

No. 97. Tuesday, February 19, 1751.

Fœcunda culpæ secula nuptias
Primum inquinavere, et genus, et domos.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit. Hor.

Fruitful of crimes, this age first stain'd
Their hapless offspring, and profan'd
The nuptial bed; from whence the woes,
Which various and unnumber'd rose
From this polluted fountain head,
O'er Rome and o'er the nations spread. Francis.

The reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author from whom the age has received greater favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—When the Spectator was first published in single papers, it gave me so much pleasure, that it is one of the favourite amusements of my age to recollect it; and when I reflect on the foibles of those times, as described in that useful work, and compare them with the vices now reigning among us, I cannot but wish that you would oftener take cognizance of the manners of the better half of the human species, that if your precepts and observations be carried down to posterity,

the Spectators may show to the rising generation what were the fashionable follies of their grandmothers, the Rambler of their mothers, and that from both they may draw instruction and warning.

When I read those Spectators which took notice of the misbehaviour of young women at church, by which they vainly hope to attract admirers, I used to pronounce such forward young women *Seekers*, in order to distinguish them by a mark of infamy from those who had patience and decency to stay till they were sought.

But I have lived to see such a change in the manners of women, that I would now be willing to compound with them for that name, although I then thought it disgraceful enough, if they would deserve no worse; since now they are too generally given up to negligence of domestic business, to idle amusements, and to wicked rackets, without any settled view at all but of squandering time.

In the time of the Spectator, excepting sometimes in appearance in the ring, sometimes at a good and chosen play, sometimes on a visit at the house of a grave relation, the young ladies contented themselves to be found employed in domestic duties; for then routes, drums, balls, assemblies, and such like markets for women, were not known.

Modesty and diffidence, gentleness and meekness, were looked upon as the appropriate virtues and characteristic graces of the sex. And if a forward spirit pushed itself into notice it was exposed in print as it deserved.

The churches were almost the only places where single women were to be seen by strangers. Men went thither expecting to see them, and perhaps too much for that only purpose.

But some good often resulted, however improper might be their motives. Both sexes were in the way of their duty. The man must be abandoned, indeed, who loves not goodness in another; nor were the young fellows of that age so wholly lost to a sense of right, as pride and conceit have since made them affect to be. When therefore they saw a fair-one whose decent behaviour and cheerful piety showed her earnest in her first duties, they had the less doubt, judging politically only, that she would have a conscientious regard to her second.

With what ardour have I seen watched for, the rising of a kneeling beauty; and what additional charms has devotion given to her recommunicated features!

The men were often the better for what they heard. Even a Saul was once found prophesying among the prophets whom he had set out to destroy. To a man thus put into good humour by a pleasing object, religion itself looked more amia-

ble. The *men seekers* of the Spectator's time loved the holy place for the object's sake, and loved the object for her suitable behaviour in it.

Reverence mingled with their love, and they thought that a young lady of such good principles must be addressed only by the man who at least made a show of good principles, whether his heart was yet quite right or not.

Nor did the young lady's behaviour, at any time of the service, lessen this reverence. Her eyes were her own, her ears the preacher's. Women are always most observed when they seem themselves least to observe, or to lay out for observation. The eye of a respectful lover loves rather to receive confidence from the withdrawn eye of the fair-one, than to find itself obliged to retreat.

When a young gentleman's affection was thus laudably engaged, he pursued its natural dictates; keeping then was a rare, at least a secret and scandalous vice, and a wife was the summit of his wishes. Rejection was now dreaded and pre-engagement apprehended. A woman whom he loved, he was ready to think must be admired by all the world. His fears, his uncertainties, increased his love.

Every inquiry he made into the lady's domestic excellence, which, when a wife is to be chosen, will surely not be neglected, confirmed him in his choice. He opens his heart to a common friend, and honestly discovers the state of his fortune. His friend applies to those of the young lady, whose parents, if they approve his proposals, disclose them to their daughter.

She perhaps is not an absolute stranger to the passion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his assiduities, his constant attendance at a church, whither, till of late, he used seldom to come, and a thousand little observances that he paid her, had very probably first forced her to regard, and then inclined her to favour him.

That a young lady should be in love, and the love of the young gentleman undeclared, is an heterodoxy which prudence, and even policy, must not allow. But, thus applied to, she is all resignation to her parents. Charming resignation, which inclination opposes not.

Her relations applaud her for her duty; friends meet; points are adjusted: delightful perturbations, and hopes, and a few lover's fears, fill up the tedious space till an interview is granted; for the young lady had not made herself cheap at public places.

The time of interview arrives. She is modestly reserved; he is not confident. He declares his passion; the conscious-

ness of her own worth, and his application to her parents, take from her any doubt of his sincerity; and she owns herself obliged to him for his good opinion. The inquiries of her friends into his character, have taught her that his good opinion deserves to be valued.

She tacitly allows of his future visits; he renews them; the regard of each for the other is confirmed; and when he presses for the favour of her hand, he receives a declaration of an entire acquiescence with her duty, and a modest acknowledgment of esteem for him.

He applies to her parents therefore for a near day; and thinks himself under obligation to them for the cheerful and affectionate manner with which they receive his agreeable application.

With this prospect of future happiness, the marriage is celebrated. Gratulations pour in from every quarter. Parents and relations on both sides, brought acquainted in the course of the courtship, can receive the happy couple with countenances illumined, and joyful hearts.

The brothers, the sisters, the friends of one family, are the brothers, the sisters, the friends of the other. Their two families, thus made one, are the world to the young couple.

Their home is the place of their principal delight, nor do they ever occasionally quit it but they find the pleasure of returning to it augmented in proportion to the time of their absence from it.

Oh, Mr. Rambler! forgive the talkativeness of an old man! When I courted and married my Lætitia, then a blooming beauty, every thing passed just so! But how is the case now? The ladies, maidens, wives, and widows, are engrossed by places of open resort and general entertainment, which fill every quarter of the metropolis, and being constantly frequented, make home irksome. Breakfasting-places, dinner-places, routes, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas, masquerades for the evening, and even for all night; and, lately, public sales of the goods of broken housekeepers, which the general dissoluteness of manners has contributed to make very frequent, come in as another seasonable relief to these modern time-killers.

In the summer there are in every country-town assemblies; Tunbridge, Bath, Cheltenham, Scarborough! What expense of dress and equipage is required to qualify the frequenters for such emulous appearance!

By the natural infection of example, the lowest people have places of six-penny resort, and gaming tables for pence.

Thus servants are now induced to fraud and dishonesty, to support extravagance, and supply their losses.

As to the ladies who frequent those public places, they are not ashamed to show their faces wherever men dare go, nor blush to try who shall stare most impudently, or who shall laugh loudest on the public walks.

The men who would make good husbands, if they visit those places, are frighted at wedlock, and resolve to live single, except they are bought at a very high price. They can be spectators of all that passes, and, if they please, more than spectators, at the expense of others. The companion of an evening, and the companion for life, require very different qualifications.

Two thousand pounds in the last age, with a domestic wife, would go farther than ten thousand in this. Yet settlements are expected, that often, to a mercantile man especially, sink a fortune into uselessness; and pin-money is stipulated for, which makes a wife independent, and destroys love, by putting it out of a man's power to lay any obligation upon her, that might engage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to all this the card tables are added, how can a prudent man think of marrying?

And when the worthy men know not where to find wives, must not the sex be left to the foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age, whom they help to make such? And need even these wretches marry to enjoy the conversation of those who render their company so cheap?

And what, after all, is the benefit which the gay coquette obtains by her flutters? As she is approachable by every man without requiring, I will not say incense or adoration, but even common complaisance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage: she has companions indeed, but no lovers; for love is respectful, and timorous; and where among all her followers will she find a husband?

Set, dear sir, before the youthful, the gay, the inconsiderate, the contempt as well as the danger to which they are exposed. At one time or other, women, not utterly thoughtless, will be convinced of the justice of your censure, and the charity of your instruction.

But should your expostulations and reproofs have no effect upon those who are far gone in fashionable folly, they may be retailed from their mouths to their nieces, (marriage will not often have entitled these to daughters,) when they, the meteors of a day, find themselves elbowed off the stage of vanity by other flutterers; for the most admired women can-

not have many Tunbridge, many Bath seasons to blaze in; since even fine faces, often seen, are less regarded than new faces, the proper punishment of showy girls for rendering themselves so impolitically cheap.

I am, sir,

Your sincere admirer, &c.*

No. 98. Saturday, February 23, 1751.

Quæ nec Sarmentus *iniquas*
Cæsaris *ad mensas, nec vilis* Gabba *tulisset.* Juv.

Which not *Sarmentus* brook'd at *Cæsar's* board,
Nor grov'ling *Gabba* from his haughty lord. Elphinston.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE RAMBLER.

Mr. Rambler—You have often endeavoured to impress upon your readers an observation of more truth than novelty, that life passes, for the most part, in petty transactions: that our hours glide away in trifling amusements and slight gratifications; and that there very seldom emerges any occasion that can call forth great virtue or great abilities.

It very commonly happens that speculation has no influence on conduct. Just conclusions, and cogent arguments, formed by laborious study, and diligent inquiry, are often reposited in the treasuries of memory, as gold in the miser's chest, useless alike to others and himself. As some are not richer for the extent of their possessions, others are not wiser for the multitude of their ideas.

You have truly described the state of human beings, but it may be doubted whether you have accommodated your precepts to your description; whether you have not generally considered your readers as influenced by the tragic passions, and susceptible of pain or pleasure only from powerful agents, and from great events.

To an author who writes not for the improvement of a single art, or the establishment of a controverted doctrine, but equally intends the advantage and equally courts the perusal

* This paper was written by Richardson, the author of "Clarissa," "Pamela," &c. and, although mean and hacknied in style and sentiment, was the only paper which had a great sale during the publication of the Rambler, in its original form. C.

of all the classes of mankind, nothing can justly seem unworthy of regard, by which the pleasure of conversation may be increased, and the daily satisfactions of familiar life secured from interruption and disgust.

For this reason you would not have injured your reputation, if you had sometimes descended to the minuter duties of social beings, and enforced the observance of those little civilities and ceremonious delicacies, which, inconsiderable as they may appear to the man of science, and difficult as they may prove to be detailed with dignity, yet contribute to the regulation of the world, by facilitating the intercourse betwen one man and another, and of which the French have sufficiently testified their esteem, by terming the knowledge and practice of them *Sçavoir vivre, the art of living.*

Politeness is one of those advantages which we never estimate rightly but by the inconvenience of its loss. Its influence upon the manners is constant and uniform, so that like an equal motion, it escapes perception. The circumstances of every action are so adjusted to each other, that we do not see where any errour could have been committed, and rather acquiesce in its propriety than admire its exactness.

But as sickness shows us the value of ease, a little familiarity with those who were never taught to endeavour the gratification of others, but regulate their behaviour merely by their own will, will soon evince the necessity of established modes and formalities to the happiness and quiet of common life.

Wisdom and virtue are by no means sufficient, without the supplemental laws of good-breeding, to secure freedom from degenerating to rudeness, or self-esteem from swelling into insolence; a thousand incivilities may be committed, and a thousand offices neglected, without any remorse of conscience, or reproach from reason.

The true effect of genuine politeness seems to be rather ease than pleasure. The power of delighting must be conferred by nature, and cannot be delivered by precept, or obtained by imitation; but though it be the privilege of a very small number to ravish and to charm, every man may hope by rules and caution not to give pain, and may, therefore, by the help of good-breeding, enjoy the kindness of mankind, though he should have no claim to higher distinctions.

The universal axiom in which all complaisance is included, and from which flow all the formalities which custom has established in civilized nations, is, *That no man shold give any preference to himself.* A rule so comprehensive and cer-

tain, that, perhaps, it is not easy for the mind to image an incivility; without supposing it to be broken.

There are, indeed, in every place some particular modes of the ceremonial part of good-breeding, which, being arbitrary and accidental, can be learned only by habitude and conversation; such are the forms of salutation, the different gradations of reverence, and all the adjustments of place and precedence. These, however, may be often violated without offence, if it be sufficiently evident, that neither malice nor pride contributed to the failure; but will not atone, however rigidly observed, for the tumour of insolence, or petulence of contempt.

I have, indeed, not found among any part of mankind, less real and rational complaisance, than among those who have passed their time in paying and receiving visits, in frequenting public entertainments, in studying the exact measures of ceremony, and in watching all the variation of fashionable courtesy.

They know, indeed, at what hour they may beat the door of an acquaintance, how many steps they must attend him towards the gate, and what interval should pass before his visit is returned; but seldom extend their care beyond the exterior and unessential parts of civility, nor refuse their own vanity any gratification, however expensive to the quiet of another.

Trypherus is a man remarkable for splendour and expense; a man, that having been originally placed by his fortune and rank in the first class of the community, has acquired that air of dignity, and that readiness in the exchange of compliments, which courts, balls, and levees, easily confer.

But Trypherus, without any settled purposes of malignity, partly by his ignorance of human nature, and partly by the habit of contemplating with great satifaction his own grandeur and riches, is hourly giving disgust to those whom chance or expectation subject to his vanity.

To a man whose fortune confines him to a small house, he declaims upon the pleasure of spacious apartments, and the convenience of changing his lodging-room in different parts of the year; tells him, that he hates confinement; and concludes, that if his chamber was less, he should never wake without thinking of a prison.

To Eucretas, a man of birth equal to himself, but of much less estate, he showed his services of plate, and remarked that such things were, indeed, nothing better than costly trifles, but that no man must pretend to the rank of a gentleman without them; and that for his part, if his estate was

smaller, he should not think of enjoying, but increasing it, and would inquire out a trade for his eldest son.

He has, in imitation of some more acute an observer than himself, collected a great many shifts and artifices by which poverty is concealed; and among the ladies of small fortune, never fails to talk of frippery and slight silks, and the convenience of a general mourning.

I have been insulted a thousand times with a catalogue of his pictures, his jewels, and his rarities, which, though he knows the humble neatness of my habitation, he seldom fails to conclude by a declaration, that wherever he sees a house meanly furnished, he despises the owner's taste, or pities his poverty.

This, Mr. Rambler, is the practice of Trypherus, by which he is become the terrour of all who are less wealthy than himself, and has raised innumerable enemies without rivalry, and without malevolence.

Yet though all are not equally culpable with Trypherus, it is scarcely possible to find any man who does not frequently, like him, indulge his own pride, by forcing others into a comparison with himself, when he knows the advantage is on his side, without considering, that unnecessarily to obtrude unpleasing ideas, is a species of oppression; and that it is little more criminal to deprive another of some real advantage, than to interrupt that forgetfulness of its absence which is the next happiness to actual possession.

I am, &c.

EUTROPIUS.

No. 99. TUESDAY, February 26, 1751.

Scilicet ingeniis aliqua est concordia junctis,
Et servat studii fœdera quisque sui,
Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,
Rectorem dubiæ navita puppis amat. OVID.

Congenial passions souls together bind,
And ev'ry calling mingles with its kind;
Soldier unites with soldier, swain with swain,
The mariner with him that roves the main. F. LEWIS.

IT has been ordained by Providence, for the conservation of order in the immense variety of nature, and for the regular propagation of the several classes of life with which the elements are peopled, that every creature should be drawn by some secret attraction to those of his own kind; and that

not only the gentle and domestic animals which naturally unite into companies, or cohabit by pairs, should continue faithful to their species; but even those ravenous and ferocious savages which Aristotle observes never to be gregarious, should range mountains and deserts in search of one another, rather than pollute the world with a monstrous birth.

As the perpetuity and distinction of the lower tribes of the creation require that they should be determined to proper mates by some uniform motive of choice, or some cogent principle of instinct; it is necessary likewise, that man, whose wider capacity demands more gratifications, and who feels in himself innumerable wants, which a life of solitude cannot supply, and innumerable powers to which it cannot give employment, should be led to suitable companions by particular influence; and, among many beings of the same nature with himself, he may select some for intimacy and tenderness, and improve the condition of his existence, by superadding friendship to humanity, and the love of individuals to that of the species.

Other animals are so formed, that they seem to contribute very little to the happiness of each other, and know neither joy, nor grief, nor love, nor hatred, but as they are urged by some desire immediately subservient either to the support of their own lives, or to the continuation of their race; they therefore seldom appear to regard any of the minuter discriminations which distinguish creatures of the same kind from one another.

But if man were to feel no incentives to kindness, more than his general tendency to congenial nature, Babylon and London, with all their multitudes, would have to him the desolation of a wilderness; his affections, not compressed into a narrower compass, would vanish like elemental fire, in boundless evaporation; he would languish in perpetual insensibility; and though he might, perhaps, in the first vigour of youth, amuse himself with the fresh enjoyments of life, yet, when curiosity should cease, and alacrity subside, he would abandon himself to the fluctuations of chance, without expecting help against any calamity, or feeling any wish for the happiness of others.

To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible; at least impossible without the extinction of those passions which now produce all our pains and all our pleasure; without the disuse, if not the abolition, of some of our faculties, and the suppression of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indifference.

The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness, which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the solitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity, were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence equally attentive to every misery.

The great community of mankind is, therefore, necessarily broken into smaller independent societies; these form distinct interests, which are too frequently opposed to each other, and which they who have entered into the league of particular governments, falsely think it virtue to promote, however destructive to the happiness of the rest of the world.

Such unions are again separated into subordinate classes and combinations, and social life is perpetually branched out into minuter subdivisions, till it terminates in the last ramifications of private friendship.

That friendship may at once be fond and lasting, it has been already observed in these papers, that a conformity of inclinations is necessary. No man can have much kindness for him by whom he does not believe himself esteemed, and nothing so evidently proves esteem as imitation.

That benevolence is always strongest which arises from participation of the same pleasures. since we are naturally most willing to revive in our minds the memory of persons, with whom the idea of enjoyment is connected.

It is commonly, therefore, to little purpose, that any one endeavours to ingratiate himself with such as he cannot accompany in their amusements and diversions. Men have been known to rise to favour and to fortune, only by being skilful in the sports with which their patron happened to be delighted, by concurring with his taste for some particular species of curiosities, by relishing the same wine, or applauding the same cookery.

Even those whom wisdom or virtue have placed above regard to such petty recommendations, must nevertheless be gained by similitude of manners. The highest and noblest enjoyment of familiar life, the communication of knowledge and reciprocation of sentiments, must always presuppose a disposition to the same inquiry, and delight in the same discoveries.

With what satisfaction could the politician lay his schemes for the reformation of laws, or his comparisons of different forms of government, before the chemist, who has never accustomed his thoughts to any other object than salt and sulphur? or how could the astronomer, in explaining his calcu-

lations and conjectures, endure the coldness of a grammarian, who would lose sight of Jupiter and all his satellites, for a happy etymology of an obscure word, or a better explication of a controverted line?

Every man loves merit of the same kind with his own when it is not likely to hinder his advancement or his reputation; for he not only best understands the worth of those qualities which he labours to cultivate, or the usefulness of the art which he practises with success, but always feels a reflected pleasure from the praises, which, though given to another, belong equally to himself.

There is indeed no need of research and refinement to discover that men must generally select their companions from their own state of life, since there are not many minds furnished for great variety of conversation, or adapted to multiplicity of intellectual entertainments.

The sailor, the academic, the lawyer, the mechanic, and the courtier, have all a cast of talk peculiar to their own fraternity, have fixed their attention upon the same events, have been engaged in affairs of the same sort, and made use of allusions and illustrations which themselves only can understand.

To be infected with the jargon of a peculiar profession, and to know only the language of a single rank of mortals, is indeed sufficiently despicable. But as limits must be always set to the excursions of the human mind, there will be some study which every man more zealously prosecutes, some darling subject on which he is principally pleased to converse; and he that can most inform or best understand him, will certainly be welcomed with particular regard.

Such partiality is not wholly to be avoided, nor is it culpable, unless suffered so far to predominate as to produce aversion from every other kind of excellence, and to shade the lustre of dissimilar virtues. Those, therefore, whom the lot of life has conjoined, should endeavour constantly to approach toward the inclination of each other, invigorate every motion of concurrent desire, and fan every spark of kindred curiosity.

It has been justly observed, that discord generally operates in little things; it is inflamed to its utmost vehemence by contrariety of taste, oftener than of principles; and might therefore commonly be avoided by innocent conformity, which, if it was not at first the motive, ought always to be the consequence, of indissoluble union.

No. 100. Saturday, March 2, 1751.

Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus *amico*
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit. Persius.

Horace, with sly insinuating grace,
Laugh'd at his friend, and look'd him in the face;
Would raise a blush where secret vice he found,
And tickle while he gently prob'd the wound.
With seeming innocence the crowd beguil'd;
But made the desperate passes, when he smil'd. Dryden.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—As very many well-disposed persons, by the unavoidable necessity of their affairs, are so unfortunate as to be totally buried in the country where they labour under the most deplorable ignorance of what is transacting among the polite part of mankind, I cannot help thinking, that as a public writer, you should take the case of these truly compassionable objects under your consideration.

These unhappy languishers in obscurity should be furnished with such accounts of the employments of people of the world, as may engage them in their several remote corners to a laudable imitation; or, at least, so far inform and prepare them, that if by any joyful change of situation they should be suddenly transported into the gay scene, they may not gape, and wonder, and stare, and be utterly at a loss how to behave and make a proper appearance in it.

It is inconceivable how much the welfare of all the country towns in the kingdom might be promoted, if you would use your charitable endeavours to raise in them a noble emulation of the manners and customs of higher life.

For this purpose you should give a very clear and ample description of the whole set of polite acquirements; a complete history of forms, fashions, frolics, of routs, drums, hurricanes, balls, assemblies, ridottos, masquerades, auctions, plays, operas, puppet-shows, and bear-gardens; of all those delights which profitably engage the attention of the most sublime characters, and by which they have brought to such amazing perfection the whole art and mystery of passing day after day, week after week, and year after year, without the heavy assistance of any one thing that formal creatures are pleased to call useful and necessary.

In giving due instructions through what steps to attain this summit of human excellence, you may add such irresistible

arguments in its favour, as must convince numbers, who in other instances do not seem to want natural understanding, of the accountable errour of supposing they were sent into the world for any other purpose but to flutter, sport, and shine. For after all, nothing can be clearer than that an everlasting round of diversion, and the more lively and hurrying the better, is the most important end of human life.

It is really prodigious, so much as the world is improved, that there should in these days be persons so ignorant and stupid as to think it necessary to mispend their time, and trouble their heads about any thing else than pursuing the present fancy; for what else is worth living for?

It is time enough surely to think of consequences when they come; and as for the antiquated notions of duty, they are not to be met with in any French novel, or any book one ever looks into, but derived almost wholly from the writings of authors, who lived a vast many ages ago: and who, as they were totally without any idea of those accomplishments which now characterize people of distinction, have been for some time sinking space into utter contempt. It does not appear that even their most zealous admirers, for some partizans of his own sort every writer will have, can pretend to say they were ever at one ridotto.

In the important article of diversions, the ceremonial of visits, the ecstatic delight of unfriendly intimacies and unmeaning civilities, they are absolutely silent. Blunt truth, and downright honesty, plain clothes, staying at home, hard work, few words, and those unenlivened with censure or double meaning, are what they recommend as the ornaments and pleasures of life. Little oaths, polite dissimulation, tea-table scandal, delightful indolence, the glitter of finery, the triumph of precedence, the enchantments of flattery, they seem to have had no notion of, and I cannot but laugh to think what a figure they would have made in a drawing-room, and how frighted they would have looked at a gaming-table.

The noble zeal of patriotism that disdains authority, and tramples on laws for sport, was absolutely the aversion of these tame wretches.

Indeed one cannot discover any one thing they pretend to teach people, but to be wise, and good; acquirements infinitely below the consideration of persons of taste and spirit, who know how to spend their time to so much better purpose.

Among other admirable improvements, pray, Mr. Rambler, do not forget to enlarge on the very extensive benefit of play-

ing at cards on Sundays; a practice of such infinite use, that we may modestly expect to see it prevail universally in all parts of this kingdom.

To persons of fashion, the advantage is obvious; because, as for some strange reason or other, which no fine gentleman or fine lady has yet been able to penetrate, there is neither play, nor masquerade, nor bottled conjurer, nor any other thing worth living for, to be had on a Sunday; if it were not for the charitable assistance of whist or bragg, the genteel part of mankind must, one day in seven, necessarily suffer a total extinction of being.

Nor are the persons of high rank the only gainers by so salutary a custom, which extends its good influence, in some degree, to the lower orders of people; but were it quite general, how much better and happier would the world be than it is even now?

'Tis hard upon poor creatures, be they ever so mean, to deny them those enjoyments and liberties which are equally open for all. Yet if servants were taught to go to church, on this day, spend some part of it in reading or receiving instruction in a family way, and the rest in mere friendly conversation, the poor wretches would infallibly take it into their heads, that they were obliged to the sober, modest, diligent, and faithful to their masters and mistresses.

Now surely no one of common prudence or humanity would wish their domestics infected with such strange and primitive notions, or laid under such unmerciful restraints: all which may, in a great measure, be prevented by the prevalence of the good-humoured fashion, that I would have you recommend. For when the lower kind of people see their betters, with a truly laudable spirit, insulting and flying in the face of those rude, ill-bred dictators, piety and the laws, they are thereby excited and admonished, as far as actions can admonish and excite, and taught that they too have an equal right of setting them at defiance in such instances as their particular necessities and inclinations may require; and thus is the liberty of the whole human species mightily improved and enlarged.

In short, Mr. Rambler, by a faithful representation of the numberless benefits of a modish life, you will have done your part in promoting what every body seems to confess the true purpose of human existence, perpetual dissipation.

By encouraging people to employ their whole attention on trifles, and make amusement their sole study, you will teach them how to avoid many very uneasy reflections.

All the soft feelings of humanity, the sympathies of friendship, all natural temptations to the care of a family, and solicitude about the good or ill of others, with the whole train of domestic and social affections, which create such daily anxieties and embarrassments, will be happily stifled and suppressed in a round of perpetual delights; and all serious thoughts, but particularly that of *hereafter*, be banished out of the world; a most perplexing apprehension, but luckily a most groundless one too, as it is so very clear a case, that nobody ever dies.

I am, &c.

CHARIESSA.*

No. 101. TUESDAY, March 5, 1751.

Mella jubes Hyblæa tibi vel Hymettia nasci,
Et thyma Cecropiæ Corsica pensis api. MART.

Alas! dear sir, you try in vain,
Impossibilities to gain;
No bee from Corsica's rank juice
Hyblæan honey can produce. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—Having by several years of continual study treasured in my mind a great number of principles and ideas, and obtained by frequent exercise the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readiness, I resolved to quit the university, where I considered myself as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the crowd of public life. I was naturally attracted by the company of those who were of the same age with myself, and finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to jocularity and burlesque. Thus, in a short time, I had heated my imagination to such a state of activity and ebullition, that upon every occasion it fumed away in bursts of wit, and evaporations of gaiety. I became on a sudden the idol of the coffee-house, was in one winter solicited to accept the presidentship of five clubs, was dragged by violence to every new play, and quoted in every controversy upon the-

* Written by Mrs. Carter of Deal, the only survivor of the writers of that age. C.

atrical merit; was in every public place surrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of resort my maxims and my jests, and was boasted as their intimate and companion, by many who had no other pretensions to my acquaintance, than that they had drank chocolate in the same room.

You will not wonder, Mr. Rambler, that I mention my success with some appearances of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of superiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred by the powers of conversation, by extemporaneous sprightliness of fancy, copiousness of language, and fertility of sentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greater part of the praise is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, spreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleasure or advantage from the diffusion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal sovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himself, and enjoys all the pleasures which he bestows; he finds his power confessed by every one that approaches him, sees friendship kindling with rapture, and attention swelling into praise.

The desire which every man feels of importance and esteem, is so much gratified by finding an assembly, at his entrance, brightened with gladness and hushed with expectation, that the recollection of such distinctions can scarcely fail to be pleasing whensoever it is innocent. And my conscience does not reproach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity; since I always employed my influence on the side of virtue, and never sacrificed my understanding or my religion to the pleasure of applause.

There were many whom either the desire of enjoying my pleasantry, or the pride of being thought to enjoy it, brought often into my company; but I was caressed in a particular manner by Demochares, a gentleman of a large estate, and liberal disposition. My fortune being by no means exuberant, inclined me to be pleased with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became by daily invitations habituated to his table, and, as he believed my acquaintance necessary to the character of elegance, which he was desirous of establishing, I lived in all the luxury of affluence, without expense, or dependence, and passed my life in a perpetual reciprocation of pleasure, with men brought together by similitude of accomplishments, or desire of improvement.

But all power has its sphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. Demochares being called by his affairs

into the country, imagined that he should increase his popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whose abilities were so generally allowed. The report presently spread through half the country that Demochares was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated Hilarius, by whom such merriment would be excited, as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpose for which I was invited, and, as men do not look diligently out for possible miscarriages was pleased to find myself courted upon principles of interest, and considered as capable of reconciling factions, composing feuds, and uniting a whole province in social happiness.

After a few days spent in adjusting his domestic regulations, Demochares invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my presence was expected to heighten the pleasure of the feast. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raised in my favour, and represented the satisfaction with which he should see me kindle up the blaze of merriment, and should remark the various effects that my fire would have upon such diversity of matter.

This declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with solicitude. I felt an ambition of shining which I never knew before; and was therefoue embarrassed with an unusual fear of disgrace. I passed the night in planning out to myself the conversation of the coming day; recollected all my topics, prepared smart replies to a thousand questions, accommodated answers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illustrations.

The morning broke at last in the midst of these busy meditations. I rose with the palpitations of a champion on the day of combat; and, notwithstanding all my efforts, found my spirits sunk under the weight of expectation. The company soon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to Hilarius. What conception the inhabitants of this region had formed of a wit, I cannot yet discover; but observed that they all seemed, after the regular exchange of compliments, to turn away disappointed; and that while we waited for dinner, they cast their eyes upon me, and then upon each other, like a theatrical assembly waiting for a show.

From the uneasiness of this situation, I was relieved by the dinner; and as every attention was taken up by the business of the hour, I sunk quietly to a level with the rest of the company. But no sooner were the dishes removed, than, in-

stead of cheerful confidence and familiar prattle, an universal silence again showed their expectation of some unusual performance. My friend endeavoured to rouse them by healths and questions, but they answered him with great brevity, and immediately relapsed into their former taciturnity.

I had waited in hope of some opportunity to divert them, but could find no pass opened for a single sally; and who can be merry without an object of mirth? After a few faint efforts, which produced neither applause nor opposition, I was content to mingle with the mass, to put round the glass in silence, and solace myself with my own contemplations.

My friend looked round him; the guests stared at one another; and if now and then a few syllables were uttered with timidity and hesitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleasing, and disposition to be pleased. Thus passed the hours to which so much happiness was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to Hilarius.

At last the night came on, and the necessity of parting freed us from the persecutions of each other. I heard them, as they walked along the court, murmuring at the loss of the day, and inquiring whether any man would pay a second visit to a house haunted by a wit?

Demochares, whose benevolence is greater than his penetration, having flattered his hopes with the secondary honour which he was to gain by my sprightliness and elegance, and the affection with which he should be followed for a perpetual banquet of gaiety, was not able to conceal his vexation and resentment, nor would easily be convinced, that I had not sacrificed his interest to sullenness and caprice, and studiously endeavoured to disgust his guests, and suppressed my powers of delighting, in obstinate and premeditated silence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; some being of opinion, that my friend is deluded by an impostor, who, though he has found some art of gaining his favour, is afraid to speak before men of more penetration; and others concluding, that I think only London the proper theatre of my abilities, and disdain to exert my genius for the praise of rustics.

I believe Mr. Rambler, that it has sometimes happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the same censures upon the like occasions. I hope therefore that you will prevent any misrepresentations of such failures, by remarking, that invention is not wholly at the command of its possessor; that the power of pleasing

is very often obstructed by the desire; that all expectation lessens surprise, yet some surprise is necessary to gaiety; and that those who desire to partake of the pleasure of wit must contribute to its production, since the mind stagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy, which flashes into transport, can be raised only by the infusion of dissimilar ideas.

No. 102. Saturday, March 9, 1754.

Ipsa quoque assidue labuntur tempora motu
Non secus ac flumen: neque enim consistere flumen,
Nec lexis hora potest; sed ut unda impellitur unda,
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem,
Tempora sic fugiunt pariter, pariterque sequuntur. Ovid.

With constant motion as the moments glide,
Behold in running life the rolling tide!
For none can stem by art, or stop by pow'r,
The flowing ocean, or the fleeting hour:
But wave by wave pursu'd arrives on shore,
And each impell'd behind impels before:
So time on time revolving we descry;
So minutes follow, and so minutes fly. Elphinston.

"Life," says Seneca, "is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasing part of old age." The perusal of this passage having incited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity; but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that we were launching out into the *Ocean of Life*; that we had already passed the straits of infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness or negligence, of those who undertook to steer them; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the

winds and billows, without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choose among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness; and first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure; but no sooner touched, than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible and bore him away. Beyond these islands all were darkness, nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on each side, was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eye could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable; but though it was impossible to sail against it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with much care or prudence: for by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking round him; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed: nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course: if he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference, or from weariness of their present condition; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction, failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not

now be given him; and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage; so that every passenger was certain, that how long soever he might, by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been expected to sadden the gay, and intimidate the daring, at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the solace of their labours: yet, in effect, none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrours that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward, but found some amusement for the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with Hope, who was the constant associate of the voyage of life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was not that they should escape, but that they should sink last; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for seeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions; for, in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she redoubled her assurances of safety; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage, than they whom all but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of life was the gulph of Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose, and with shades, where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks all who sailed on the ocean of life must necessarily pass. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet by which they might escape; but very few could, by her entreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should approach so near the rocks of Pleasure, that they might solace themselves with

a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulf of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulf was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach of the gulf of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow; but I remarked that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that they sunk later, and more suddenly; for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the straits of infancy, perish in the way, and at last were overset by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure, commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harassed themselves by labours that scarce Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown Power, "Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless rant-

quillity,' when thou and they are equally endangered?" I looked, and seeing the gulf of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

No. 103. Tuesday, March 12, 1751.

Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri. Juv.

They search the secrets of the house, and so
Are worshipp'd there, and fear'd for what they know. Dryden.

Curiosity is one of the permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intellect. Every advance into knowledge opens new prospects, and produces new incitements to further progress. All the attainments possible in our present state are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment; conquest serves no purpose but that of kindling ambition, discovery has no effect but of raising expectation; the gratification of one desire encourages another; and after all our labours, studies, and inquiries, we are continually at the same distance from the completion of our schemes, have still some wish importunate to be satisfied, and some faculty restless and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The desire of knowledge, though often animated by extrinsic and adventitious motives, seems on many occasions to operate without subordination to any other principle; we are eager to see and hear, without intention of referring our observations to a farther end; we climb a mountain for a prospect of the plain; we run to the strand in a storm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water; we range from city to city, though we profess neither architecture nor fortification; we cross seas only to view nature in nakedness, or magnificence in ruins; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind, by a desert or a palace, a cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude and every thing polished, every thing great and every thing little; we do not see a thicket but with some temptation to enter it, nor remark an insect flying before us but with an inclination to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and enlarged. Lucan therefore introduces Cæsar speaking with dignity suitable to the grandeur of his designs and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high-priest of Egypt, that he has no desire equally powerful with that of finding the

origin of the Nile, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a sight of those fountains which had been so long concealed. And Homer, when he would furnish the Syrens with a temptation, to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, might yield without disgrace, makes them declare that none ever departed from them but with increase of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal acquirement which may not be applied to some use, or which may not at least gratify pride with occasional superiority; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind will find, that upon the first appearance of an object, or the first start of a question, his inclination to a nearer view, or more accurate discussion, precedes all thougts of profit, or of competition; and that his desires take wing by instantaneous impulse, though their flight may be invigorated, or their efforts renewed, by subsequent considerations. The gratification of curiosity rather frees us from uneasiness than confers pleasure; we are more pained by ignorance than delighted by instruction. Curiosity is the thirst of the soul; it inflames and torments us, and makes us taste every thing with joy, however otherwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

Is is evident that the earliest searchers after knowledge must have proposed knowledge only as their reward; and that science, though perhaps the nursling of interest, was the daughter of curiosity: for who can believe that they who first watched the course of the stars, foresaw the use of their discoveries to the facilitation of commerce, or the mensuration of time? They were delighted with the splendour of the nocturnal skies, they found that the lights changed their places; what they admired they were anxious to understand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are, indeed, beings in the form of men, who appear satisfied with their intellectual possessions, and seem to live without desire of enlarging their conceptions; before whom the world passes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or by art.

This negligence is sometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant passion; a lover finds no inclination to travel any path, but that which leads to the habitation of his mistress; a trader can spare little attention to common occurrences, when his fortune is endangered by a storm. It is frequently the consequence of a total immersion in sensuality: corporeal pleasures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happiness is obliterated: the mind, long habituated to a lethargic and quiescent state, is unwilling to

wake to the toil of thinking; and though she may sometimes be disturbed by the obtrusion of new ideas, shrinks back again to ignorance and rest.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual task of procuring the supports of life, denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of such as live without the ardour of inquiry is very small, though many content themselves with cheap amusements, and waste their lives in researches of no importance.

There is no snare more dangerous to busy and excursive minds, than the cobwebs of petty inquisitiveness, which entangle them in trivial employments, and minute studies, and detain them in a middle state, between the tediousness of total inactivity, and the fatigue of laborious efforts, and enchant them at once with ease and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The necessity of doing something, and the fear of undertaking much, sinks the historian to a geneologist, the philosopher to a journalist of the weather, and the mathematician to a constructor of dials.

It is happy when those who cannot content themselves to be idle, nor resolve to be industrious, are at least employed without injury to others; but it seldom happens that we can contain ourselves long in a neutral state, or forbear to sink into vice, when we are no longer soaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was distinguished in his earlier years by an uncommon liveliness of imagination, quickness of sagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life, he applied himself with particular inquisitiveness to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different modifications of interest and ambition, and the various causes of miscarriage and success, both in public and private affairs.

Though his friends did not discover to what purpose all these observations were collected, or how Nugaculus would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an incessant attention to changes of countenance, bursts of inconsideration, sallies of passion, and all the other casualties by which he used to trace a character, yet they could not deny the study of human nature to be worthy of a wise man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his discoveries, and listened with submissive modesty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakness of resolves, and the instability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling passion.

Such was the first incitement of Nugaculus to a close in-

spection into the conduct of mankind. He had no interest in view, and therefore no design of supplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expose them; but having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himself, but has passed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every rising character, and lived upon a small estate without any thought of increasing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general master of secret history, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and stratagems, of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's estate, the terms upon which every spendthrift raises his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure stipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maiden aunts and childless acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every house, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his steward; he can tell where the manor-house is falling, though large sums are yearly paid for repairs; and where the tenants are selling woods without the consent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence he is inadvertently guilty of a thousand acts of treachery. He sees no man's servant without draining him of his trust; he enters no family without flattering the children into discoveries; he is a perpetual spy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows, by long experience, at whatever distance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and therefore his industry has not hitherto been very mischievous to others, or dangerous to himself; but since he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by discovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffic like the chemists, and purchase one secret with another; he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is considered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happiness in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at first, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declension of minuteness, betrayed Nugaculus, not only to a foolish, but vicious waste of a life, which might have been honourably passed in public services, or domestic virtues. He has lost his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engross, but do not improve it.

No. 104. Saturday, March 16, 1751.

——Nihil est quod credere de se
Non possit—— Juv.

None e'er rejects hyperboles of praise.

The apparent insufficiency of every individual to his own happiness or safety, compels us to seek from one another assistance and support. The necessity of joint efforts for the execution of any great or extensive design, the variety of powers disseminated in the species, and the proportion between the defects and excellences of different persons, demand an interchange of help, and communication of intelligence, and by frequent reciprocations of beneficence unite mankind in society and friendship.

If it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a state of equality, without distinction of rank, or peculiarity of possessions, it is reasonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his strength, or his skill, to the supply of natural wants; there was then little room for peevish dislike, or capricious favour; the affection admitted into the heart was rather esteem than tenderness; and kindness was only purchased by benefits. But when by force or policy, by wisdom or by fortune, property and superiority were introduced and established, so that many were condemed to labour for the support of a few, then they whose possessions swelled above their wants, naturally laid out their superfluities upon pleasure; and those who could not gain friendship by necessary offices, endeavoured to promote their interest by luxurious gratifications, and to create needs, which they might be courted to supply.

The desires of mankind are much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination much larger than actual enjoyment. Multitudes are therefore unsatisfied with their allotment; and he that hopes to improve his condition by the favour of another, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himself excelled by his rivals, will, by other expedients, endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the *art of pleasing* among the most useful studies, and most valuable acquisitions.

This art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its usefulness, and will always flourish most where it is most rewarded; for this reason we find it practised with great assiduity under absolute governments, where honours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who soon becomes so much accustomed to compliance and officiousness, as not easily to find, in the most delicate address, that novelty which is necessary to procure attention.

It is discovered by a very few experiments, that no man is much pleased with a companion, who does not increase, in some respect, his fondness of himself; and, therefore, he that wishes rather to be led forward to prosperity by the gentle hand of favour, than to force his way by labour and merit, must consider with more care how to display his patron's excellencies than his own; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleasing dreams, and chase away disgust and weariness by a perpetual succession of delightful images.

This may, indeed, sometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really possessed, or upon prospects which reason spreads before hope; for whoever can deserve or require to be courted, has generally, either from nature or from fortune, gifts, which he may review with satisfaction, and of which, when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will seldom be displeased.

But those who have once degraded their understanding to an application only to the passions, and who have learned to derive hope from any other sources than industry and virtue, seldom retain dignity and magnanimity sufficient to defend them against the constant recurrence of temptation to falsehood. He that is too desirous to be loved, will soon learn to flatter, and when he has exhausted all the variations of honest praise, and can delight no longer with the civility of truth, he will invent new topics of panegyric, and break out into raptures at virtues and beauties conferred by himself.

The drudgeries of dependence would, indeed, be aggravated by hopelessness of success, if no indulgence was allowed to adulation. He that will obstinately confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deserves, will soon be forced to give way to others that regale him with more compass of music. The greatest human virtue bears no proportion to human vanity. We always think ourselves better than we are, and are generally desirous that others should think us still better than we think ourselves. To praise us for actions or dispositions which deserve praise, is not to confer a

benefit, but to pay a tribute. We have always pretensions to fame, which, in our own hearts, we know to be disputable, and which we are desirous to strengthen by a new suffrage; we have always hopes which we suspect to be fallacious, and of which we eagerly snatch at every confirmation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the first approaches under the conduct of truth, and to secure credit to future encomiums, by such praise as may be ratified by the conscience; but the mind once habituated to the lusciousness of eulogy, becomes, in a short time, nice and fastidious, and, like a vitiated palate, is incessantly calling for higher gratifications.

It is scarcely credible to what degree discernment may be dazzled by the mist of pride, and wisdom infatuated by the intoxication of flattery; or how low the genius may descend by successive gradations of servility, and how swiftly it may fall down the precipice of falsehood. No man can, indeed, observe, without indignation, on what names, both of ancient and modern times, the utmost exuberance of praise has been lavished, and by what hands it has been bestowed. It has never yet been found, that the tyrant, the plunderer, the oppressor, the most hateful of the hateful, the most profligate of the profligate, have been denied any celebrations which they were willing to purchase, or that wickedness and folly have not found correspondent flatterers through all their subordinations, except when they have been associated with avarice or poverty, and have wanted either inclination or ability to hire a panegyrist.

As there is no character so deformed as to fright away from it the prostitutes of praise, there is no degree of encomiastic veneration which pride has refused. The emperors of Rome suffered themselves to be worshipped in their lives with altars and sacrifices; and in an age more enlightened, the terms peculiar to the praise and worship of the Supreme Being, have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and, whom nothing but riches or power hindered those that read or wrote their deification, from hunting into the toils of justice, as disturbers of the peace of nature.

There are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who must be resigned to infamy without vindication and whom we must confess to have deserted the cause of virtue for pay: they have committed, against full conviction, the crime of obliterating the distinctions between good and evil and, instead of opposing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progress, and celebrated her conquests. But there is a lower

class of sycophants, whose understanding has not made them capable of equal guilt. Every man of high rank is surrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action, than his maxims, and his conduct; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance reconciles to all his vices, and all his absurdities; and who easily persuade themselves to esteem him, by whose regard they consider themselves as distinguished and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themselves within the sphere of greatness. Stupidity is soon blinded by the splendour of wealth, and cowardice is easily fettered in the shackles of dependence. To solicit patronage, is, at least, in the event, to set virtue to sale. None can be pleased without praise, and few can be praised without falsehood; few can be assiduous without servility, and none can be servile without corruption.

No. 105. Tuesday, March 19, 1751.

——Animorum
Impulsu, et cæca magnaque cupidine ducti. Juv.

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resign'd;
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.

I was lately considering, among other subjects of speculation, the new attempt of an *universal register*, an office, in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation shall be so established that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desparation, nor its informations suspected as the fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied; where every lawful passion may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction; where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together, and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation; must equally deserve the attention of the merchant

and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of others. Nor will it be an uninstructing school to the greatest masters of method and despatch, if such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrassment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project, and filling my thoughts with its regulation, its conveniencies, its variety, and its consequences, I sunk gradually into slumber: but the same images, though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were passing without confusion; every face on which I fixed my eyes, seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained a while in the unpleasing state of an idler, where all other beings were busy, giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-loved protectress, Curiosity. "Great goddess," said I, "may thy votary be permitted to implore thy favour; if thou hast been my directress from the first dawn of reason; if I have followed thee through the maze of life with invariable fidelity; if I have turned to every new call, and quitted at thy nod one pursuit for another; if I have never stopped at the invitation of fortune, nor forgot thy authority in the bowers of pleasure; inform me now whither chance has conducted me."

"Thou art now," replied the smiling power, "in the presence of Justice, and of Truth, whom the father of gods and men has sent down to register the demands and pretensions of mankind, that the world may at last be reduced to order, and that none may complain hereafter of being doomed to tasks for which they are unqualified, of possessing faculties for which they cannot find employment, or virtues that languish unobserved for want of opportunities to exert them, of being encumbered with superfluities which they would willingly resign, or of wasting away in desires which ought to be satisfied. Justice is now to examine every man's wishes, and Truth is to record them; let us approach, and observe the progress of this great transaction."

She then moved forward, and Truth, who knew her among the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance

till we were placed near the seat of Justice. The first who required the assistance of the office, came forward with a slow pace, and tumour of dignity, and shaking a weighty purse in his hand, demanded to be registered by Truth, as the Mæcenas of the present age, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or distress with certainty of succour. Justice very mildly inquired, whether he had calculated the expense of such a declaration? Whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would swarm about him? Whether he could distinguish idleness and negligence from calamity, ostentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To these questions he seemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his desirie of being recorded as a patron. Justice then offered to register his proposal on these conditions, that he should never suffer himself to be flattered; that he should never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he should never encourage followers without intending to reward them. These terms were too hard to be accepted; for what, said he, is the end of patronage, but the pleasure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in suspense, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety, flattering them to assiduity, and, at last, dismissing them for impatience? Justice heard his confession, and ordered his name to be posted upon the gate among cheats and robbers, and public nuisances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the discoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and sciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of punishment, pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

Justice and Truth did not trouble this great adept with many inquiries; but finding his address awkward and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be registered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very grave and philosophic aspect, required notice to be given of his intention to set out, a certain day, on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price at which they might sail above water. His desire was granted, and he retired to a convenient stand, in expectation of filling his ship, and growing rich in a short time by the secrecy, safety, and expedition of the passage.

Another desired to advertise the curious, that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical instrument, by which those who laid out their industry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might observe the direction of the weather-cocks on the hitherside of the lunar world.

Another wished to be known as the author of an invention, by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a single fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation, without any inconvenience, till the water should subside. Justice considered these projects as of no importance but to their authors, and therefore scarcely condescended to examine them; but Truth refused to admit them into the register.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of an universal medicine, by which all diseases might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of Nestor. But Justice informed them, that one universal medicine was sufficient, and she should delay the notification till she saw who could longest preserve his own life.

A thousand other claims and offers were exhibited and examined. I remarked, among this mighty multitude, that, of intellectual advantages, many had great exuberance, and few confessed any want; of every art there were a hundred professors for a single pupil; but of other attainments, such as riches, honours, and preferments, I found none that had too much, but thousands and ten thousands that thought themselves entitled to a larger dividend.

It often happened, that all misers, and women married at the close of life, advertised their want of children; nor was it uncommon for those who had a numerous offspring, to give notice of a son or daughter to be spared; but, though appearances promised well on both sides, the bargain seldom succeeded; for they soon lost their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote some scheme of public charity: a thousand proposals were immediately made, among which they hesitated till death precluded the decision.

As I stood looking on this scene of confusion, Truth condescended to ask me, what was my business at her office? I was struck with the unexpected question, and awaked by my efforts to answer it.

No. 106. Saturday, March 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. Cic.

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

It is necessary to the success of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumstances or characters, and enter the heart on that side where the passions stand ready to receive it. A lady seldom listens with attention to any praise but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffic: and the author will scarcely be pleased without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conspiracies against genius, and the slow progress of merit, or some praises of the magnanimity of those who encounter poverty and contempt in the cause of knowledge, and trust for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of posterity.

An assurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the settled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raise *monuments more durable than brass, and more conspicuous than pyramids*, has been long the common boast of literature; but, among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themselves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to dispose them, see their edifices perish as they are towering to completion, and those few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and soon sink by the saps of time.

No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a public library; for who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to increase the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praises of futurity, how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagonists, and dogmatism has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power?

——Non unquam dedit
Documenta fore majora, quàm fragili loco
Starent superbi.

Insulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,
On swelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity, most are forgotten, because they never deserved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagem of intrigue, or the servility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long inquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up a while by the breath of fashion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but, perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the Granvilles, Montagues, Stepneys, and Sheffields of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raised to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration. Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither and decay; some rise more slowy, but last long. Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a short time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of present incidents or characters which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we discuss a question which every one is desirous to understand, which is debated in every assembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we display the faults or virtues of him whose public conduct has made almost every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of such productions all the motives of interest and vanity concur; the disputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his passion, and every man is de-

sirous to inform himself concerning affairs so vehemently agitated and variously represented.

It is scarcely to be imagined, through how many subordinations of interest the ardour of party is diffused; and what multitudes fancy themselves affected by every satire or panegyric on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occasion to mention him with praise or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wishes to confirm his opinion, and to strengthen his party, will diligently peruse every paper from which he can hope for sentiments like his own. An object, however small in itself, if placed near to the eye, will engross all the rays of light; and a transaction, however trivial, swells into importance when it presses immediately on our attention. He that shall peruse the political pamphlets of any past reign, will wonder why they were so eagerly read, or so loudly praised. Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confusion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critic; and the time is coming, when the compositions of later hirelings shall lie equally despised. In proportion as those who write on temporary subjects are exalted above their merit at first, they are afterwards depressed below it; nor can the brightest elegance of diction, or most artful subtilty of reasoning, hope for so much esteem from those whose regard is no longer quickened by curiosity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertists, even when they contend for philosophical or theological truth, to be soon laid aside and slighted. Either the question is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and opposition, or mankind despair of understanding it; and growing weary of disturbance, content themselves with quiet ignorance, and refuse to be harassed with labours which they have no hopes of recompensing with knowledge.

The authors of new discoveries may surely expect to be reckoned among those whose writings are secure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established, or can bear that tediousness of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philosophy is derived from Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air; yet of

those who now adopt or enlarge his theory very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected: we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without inquiring what cavils were produced against him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themselves to studies boundless and inexhaustible, as experiments in natural philosophy. These are always lost in successive compilations as new advances are made, and former observations become more familiar. Others spend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themselves overwhelmed by subsequent collectors, that equally destroy the memory of their predecessors by amplification, transposition, or contraction. Every new system of nature gives birth to a swarm of expositors, whose business is to explain and illustrate it, and who can hope to exist no longer than the founder of their sect preserves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of composition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully studied human nature, and can well describe it, may with most reason flatter his ambition. Bacon, among all his pretensions to the regard of posterity, seems to have pleased himself chiefly with his Essays, *which come home to men's business and bosoms*, and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation, that they *will live as long as books last*. It may, however, satisfy an honest benevolent mind to have been useful, though less conspicuous; nor will he that extends his hope to higher rewards, be so much anxious to obtain praise, as to discharge the duty which Providence assigns him.

No. 107. Tuesday, March 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere versibus ambo
Cœpere: alternos musæ meminisse volebant. Virg.

On themes alternate now the swains recite;
The muses in alternate themes delight. Elphinston.

Among the various censures, which the unavoidable comparison of my performances with those of my predecessors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of those changes

of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhausted novelty, and of that intermixture of subjects, or alternation of manners, by which other writers relieved weariness, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and solemn subjects in the same paper, because it seems absurd for an author to counteract himself, to press at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which like the double poison of Dryden, destroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured sometimes to divert, and sometimes to elevate; but have imagined it an useless attempt to disturb merriment by solemnity, or interrupt seriousness by drollery. Yet I shall this day publish two letters of very different tendency, which I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to please even when they are not critically approved.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Dear Sir—Though, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleasure in listening to the conversation of learned men, especially when they discourse of things which I do not understand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many disputes about the *alteration of the stile*, which, they say, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day when my mamma was gone out of the room, I asked a very great scholar what the stile was? He told me, he was afraid I should hardly understand him when he informed me, that it was the stated and established method of computing time. It was not, indeed, likely that I should understand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we should be at so much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time past, or the time to come; but I have considered them both by myself, and think it as foolish to count time that is gone, as money that is spent; and as for the time which is to come, it only seems farther off by counting; and, therefore, when any pleasure is promised me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have since listened very attentively to every one that talked upon the subject, of whom the greater part seem not to understand it better than myself; for though they often hint how much the nation has been mistaken, and rejoice that we are at last growing wiser than our ancestors, I have never been able to discover from them, that any body has died sooner

or been married later for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy that there was a great bustle with little consequence.

At last two friends of my papa, Mr. Cycle, and Mr. Starlight, being, it seems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new stile. Sweet Mr. Starlight—I am sure I shall love his name as long as I live; for he told Cycle roundly, with a fierce look, that we should never be right without a *year of confusion*. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing so charming? a whole year of confusion? When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confusion worth a thousand nights of rest: and if I can but see a year of confusion, a whole year of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feast, and there a masquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and messages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and visits, and frolics, and new fashions, I shall not care what they do with the rest of the time, nor whether they count it by the old stile or the new; for I am resolved to break loose from the nursery in the tumult, and play my part among the rest; and it will be strange if I cannot get a husband and a chariot in the year of confusion.

Cycle, who is neither so young nor so handsome as Starlight, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning; and indeed, if it should come only to this, I think the new stile is a delightful thing; for my mamma says I shall go to court when I am sixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of restraint will soon be at an end. It is strange, that with all the plots that have been laid against time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or interest, get them but for once to destroy eleven months, and then I shall be as old as some married ladies. But this is desired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. Starlight's scheme; for nothing surely could please me like a year of confusion, when I shall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen, and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-master one day, and the next for the music-master, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and spend all my time without tasks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to prescribed hours, or family rules.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

Properantia.

Mr. Rambler—I was seized this morning with an unusual pensiveness, and finding that books only served to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenness of the air and brightness of the sun.

As I wandered wrapped up in thought, my eyes were struck with the hospital for the reception of deserted infants, which I surveyed with pleasure, till, by a natural train of sentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what shelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are no longer open to receive them; and then how quick must be the transition from deluded virtue to shameless guilt, and from shameless guilt to hopeless wretchedness?

The anguish that I felt, left me no rest till I had, by your means, addressed myself to the public on behalf of those forlorn creatures, the women of the town, whose misery here might satisfy the most rigorous censor, and whose participation of common nature might surely induce us to endeavour, at least, their preservation from eternal punishment.

These were all once, if not virtuous, at least innocent; and might still have continued blameless and easy, but for the arts and insinuations of those whose rank, fortune, or education, furnished them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the situation of that woman, who, being forsaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the necessity of turning prostitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful course of life, with shame, horrour, and regret; but where can they hope for refuge? "The world is not their friend, nor the world's law." Their sighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully, and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, and threaten them with want or a jail if they show the least design of escaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a task too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the most limited power: yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the most wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal disregard of policy and goodness.

There are places, indeed, set apart, to which these unhappy creatures may resort, when the diseases of incontinence seize upon them; but if they obtain a cure to what are they reduced? Either to return with the small remains of beauty to

their former guilt, or perish in the streets with nakedness and hunger.

How frequently have the gay and thoughtless, in their evening frolics, seen a band of these miserable females, covered with rags, shivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of those who perhaps first seduced them by caresses of fondness, or magnificence of promises, go on to reduce others to the same wretchedness by the same means?

To stop the increase of this deplorable multitude, is undoubtedly the first and most pressing consideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and severity are properly employed. But surely those whom passion or interest have already depraved, have some claim to compassion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themselves. Nor will they long groan in their present afflictions, if none were to refuse them relief, but those that owe their exemption from the same distress only to their wisdom and their virtue.

I am, &c.

AMICUS.

No. 108. SATURDAY, March 30, 1751.

——Sapere aude,
Incipe. Vivendi recte qui proragat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum. HOR.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise;
He who defers his work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream, which stopp'd him, should be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on. COWLEY.

AN ancient poet, unreasonably discontented at the present state of things, which his system of opinions obliged him to represent in its worst form, has observed of the earth, "that its greater part is covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that of the rest some is encumbered with naked mountains, and some lost under barren sands; some scorched with uninterrupted heat, and some petrified with perpetual frosts; so that only a few regions remain for the production of fruits, and the pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of man."

The same observation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our present state. When we have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyranny of custom; all that passes in regulating the superficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments: many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day; and a great part of our existence serves no other purpose, than that of enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left in our disposal, it may reasonably be expected, that we should be so frugal, as to let none of them slip from us without some equivalent: and perhaps it might be found that as the earth however straitened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental distraction, would yet afford us a large space vacant to the exercise of reason and virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we squander much of our allowance, even while we think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of the negligence with which we suffer them to slide away. We never consider ourselves as possessed at once of time sufficient for any great design, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amusements. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable that, either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a survey, as the parts succeeded one another; and atoms we cannot perceive till they are united into masses. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expenses, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business, to exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance, than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires, which, if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure, and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantic and stupendous intelligences who are said to grasp a system by intuiton, and bound forward from one serise of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient, and it is only necessary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe and laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquest, and forbears another incursion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company, or in solitude, in necessary business, or in voluntary levities, the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of inquiry; but perhaps, if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity, than when it is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He

that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this it has probably proceeded, that among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence in opposition to all the obstables which external circumstances could place in their way, amidst the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life Erasmus was one continual peregrination; ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means, by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life, that he has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world, such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he sufficiently discovers, by informing us, that the *Praise of Folly*, one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on the road to Italy; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis terreretur*, lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattled away without regard to literature.

An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, that *time was his estate;* an estate indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for show rather than for use.

No. 109. Tuesday, April 2, 1751.

Gratum est, quod patriæ civem populoque dedisti,
Si facis, ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum, et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus instituas. Juv.

Grateful the gift! a member to the state,
If you that member useful shall create;
Train'd both to war, and, when the war shall cease,
As fond, as fit t'improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy. Elphinston.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Though you seem to have taken a view sufficiently extensive of the miseries of life, and have employed much of your speculation on mournful subjects, you have not yet exhausted the whole stock of human infelicity. There is still a species of wretchedness which escapes your observation, though it might supply you with many sage remarks, and salutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the start of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this instant see the Rambler snuffing his candle, rubbing his spectacles, stirring his fire, locking out interruption, and settling himself in his easy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without disturbance. For, whether it be that continued sickness or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterness of being; or that you imagine none but yourself able to discover what I suppose has been seen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world: whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the public; or fancy that you have some particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain that, whatever be your subject, melancholy for the most part bursts in upon your speculation, your gaiety is quickly overcast, and, though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleasantry, they are seldom dismissed but with heavy hearts.

That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own syllables of sadness, I will inform you, that I was condemned by some disastrous influence to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life, when satiety of common

diversions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes: congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered in my first cries such tokens of future virtue and understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happiness and the increase of their estate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in play houses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him into submissiveness. My mamma therefore governed the family without control; and except that my father still retained some authority in the stables, and, now and then, after a supernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or china dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

She therefore thought herself entitled to the superintendence of her son's education; and when my father, at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she would not suffer so fine a child to be ruined; that she never knew any boys at a grammar-school that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at the table without some awkward uneasiness; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes, and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my learning; for indeed he had known very few students that had not some stiffness in their manner. They therefore agreed that a domestic tutor should be procured, and hired an honest gentleman of mean conversation and narrow sentiments, but whom, having passed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to

teach all that was to be learned from a scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost flexibility of submission to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, lest I should mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

He had no occasion to complain of too burdensome an employment; for my mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor: and once my mother very seriously deliberated upon his total dismission, because I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearance of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies; and many a scholar, five years older than myself, have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery; but as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was now rewarded with a small annuity for

life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In a short time I came to London, and as my father was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies, and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded: the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themselves to my notice; and invited by a thousand oblique solicitations, my attendance to the play-house, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception; I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness, nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches: and another whispered that he wondered why miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addresses, suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. Rambler, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find that, though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gaiety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt. I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

No. 110. SATURDAY, April 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus anum
Lux iter est, et clara deis, et gratia simplex.
Spem sequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris,
Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas. PRUDENTIUS.

We through this maze of life one Lord obey;
Whose light and grace unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith secure of future bliss,
Gladly the joys of present life we miss:
For baffled mortals still attempt in vain,
Present and future bliss at once to gain. F. LEWIS.

THAT to please the Lord and Father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and since all ational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or punished by God, has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of divine favour, therefore constitute a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least show the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion; for, though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his

mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator, whom he must consider as a Governor too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence; and therefore the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness, to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue whom their passions had solicited aside; and animated to new attempts, and firmed perseverance, those whom difficulty had discouraged, or negligence surprised.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporeal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty, when a greater is incurred.

Incorported minds will always feel some inclination towards exterior acts and ritual observances. Ideas not represented by sensible objects are fleeting, variable, and evanescent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by some certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once establish the necessary proportion between crimes and sufferings, might securely rest upon his performance of the expiation; but while safety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid, lest he should decide too soon in his own favour, lest he should not have felt the pangs of true contrition; lest he should mistake satiety for detestation, or imagine that his passions are subdued when they are only sleeping.

From this natural and reasonable diffidence arose, in humble and timorous piety, a disposition to confound penance with repentance, to repose on human determinations, and to receive from some judicial sentence the stated and regular

assignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without resource: we seek in the knowledge of others a succour for our own ignorance, and are ready to trust any that will undertake to direct us when we have confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain by some outward marks the state of the soul, and this willingness to calm the conscience by some settled method, have produced, as they are diversified in their effects by various tempers and principles, most of the disquisitions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence; and these rules, corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts but adjuncts of repentance: yet they are too closely connected with it to be easily separated: for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced, that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger, considered as imminent, naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terrour, is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes around him without shuddering with horrour, or pant-

ing with security; what can he judge of himself but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the divine favour, and every danger more dreadful than the danger of final condemnation.

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions; and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only question in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and roused, by which the attractions of pleasure are interrupted, and the chains of sensuality are broken. It is observed by one of the fathers, *that he who restrains himself in the use of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden.* Abstinence, if nothing more, is at least, a cautious retreat from the utmost verge of permission, and confers that security which cannot be reasonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of destruction, or delights to approach the pleasures which he knows it fatal to partake. Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diseases of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and sum of repentance is a change of life. That sorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our escape, that austerity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But sorrow and terrour must naturally precede reformation; for what other cause can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himself alarmed by his conscience, anxious for the attainment of a better state, and afflicted by the memory of his past faults, may justly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of strengthening his conviction, to impress upon his mind such a sense of the divine presence, as may overpower

the blandishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and temptation.

What better can we do than prostrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Wat'ring the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

No. 111. Tuesday, April 9, 1751.

Φρονειν γὰρ ὀι ταχυς, ου ἀσφαλὲς. Sophoc.

Disaster always waits on early wit.

It has been observed, by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the most part liberally recompensed by the exuberance and fecundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts, and nocturnal frosts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the germe, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persuading the young and sprightly part of my readers, upon whom the spring naturally forces my attention, to learn, from the great process of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between speed and precipitation; to prosecute their designs with calmness, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprise and hope: having yet no occasion of comparing our force with any opposing power, we naturally form presumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obstruction and impediment will give way before us. The first repulses rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it suspects its own weakness, or submits to sap the difficulties which it expected to subdue by storm. Before disappointments have enforced the dictates of philosophy, we believe it in our power to shorten the interval between the first cause and the last effect;

we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding industry, and fancy that, by increasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of our schemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass; but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurrence, or drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel: whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition, and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts, that the time of trifling is past.

A perpetual conflict with natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recall the fire and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be born at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy: when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet, since the fear of missing what we seek, must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcations of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often raises his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours

which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed, that after a short effort, they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It frequently happens, that applause abates diligence. Whoever finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind whenever he shall again summon his force to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius, too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleasures which he conceives inexhaustible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or considered as inseparable from an early display of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly escaped by prudence and resolution, and must therefore be recounted rather as consolations to those who are less liberally endowed, than as discouragements to such as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the persecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raise the flames of unlawful love; yet, among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever

complained of the inconveniencies of an amiable form? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms?

Neither grace of person, nor vigour of understanding, are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as means of happiness indulged by the Supreme Benefactor; but the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have suddenly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependence. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest, perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed, the years of youth, of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it most; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome, and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform: and as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

No. 112. Saturday, April 13, 1751.

In mea vesanas habui dispendia vires,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipse meas. — Ovid.

Of strength pernicious to myself I boast;
The pow'rs I have were given me to my cost. — F. Lewis.

We are taught by Celsus, that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the succession of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quantities and uniform periods, is disordered by the smallest irregularity; and since we cannot adjust every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may

be able to comply with necessary affairs, or strong inclinations. He that too long observes nice punctualities, condemns himself to voluntary imbecility, and will not long escape the miseries of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally necessary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual susceptibility of occasional pleasure. Long confinement to the same company, which perhaps similitude of taste brought first together, quickly contracts the faculties, and make a thousand things offensive that are in themselves indifferent; a man accustomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratifications of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to religious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may, by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness, and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be harassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotic softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries, from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and, therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any errour or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolourations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, show us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would perhaps very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to destroy happiness by art and refinement.

But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become sufficiently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful and captious: tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence: and impatient of any association, but with those that will watch their nod, and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extended beyond the instincts of animal life; but, unhappily, he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long cessations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought, or so unskilfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning, or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood; and, in the transports of resentment, make very little distinction between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependence on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust, and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence, the obsequiousness or usefulness of half a life, and, as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank; cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of sentiment; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured con-

tradictory reproofs; heard false accusations without pain, and approbrious reproaches without reply; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; asked questions about the universal decay of trade; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted: and behaved with such prudence and circumspection, that after six years the will was made, and Juvenculus was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him: the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are embittered by age or solitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and spiteful superintendence of domestic trifles. Eriphile has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths, and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt, and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleasure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass, and wainscot from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcilable enemy to one, because she broke off a tulip with her hoop; to another, because she spilt her coffee on a Turkey carpet; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits, because company makes a house dirty; and resolves to confine herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow minds, and except when it is the effect of anguish and disease, by which the resolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the slightest addition to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasonable persuasion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of suffering perturbation and uneasiness, from causes unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadver-

tencies, or offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the least: some surpass our power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding; and such is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles we must let things of importance pass unobserved: when we examine a mite, with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, will need little proof: that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions which make him uneasy to himself, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obstruct his improvement.

No. 113. Tuesday, April 16, 1751.

Uxorem, Posthume ducis?
Dic quâ Tisiphone, quibus exagitare colubris? Juv.

A sober man like thee to change his life!
What fury wou'd possess thee with a wife? Dryden.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I know not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat censure with contempt. We owe so much reverence to the wisdom of mankind, as justly to wish, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of other suffrages; and since guilt and infamy must have the same effect upon intelligencies unable to pierce beyond external appearance, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a false charge, lest we should countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accusation with supercilious silence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villany, and inspirited by innocence. The wall of brass which Horace erects upon a clear conscience, may be sometimes raised by impudence or power; and we should always wish to preserve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedness cannot assume.

For this reason I have determined no longer to endure,

with either patient or sullen resignation, a reproach, which is, at least in my opinion, unjust; but will lay my cause honestly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preserve your boasted impartiality, when you hear, that I am considered as an adversary by half the female world, you may surely pardon me for doubting, notwithstanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourself entitled by your age, your learning, your abstraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the resolutions of the firm, and the reasonings of the wise, roused the old to sensibility, and subdued the rigorous to softness.

I am one of those unhappy beings, who have been marked out as husbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have discussed all the nuptial preliminaries so often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are settled, pin-money secured, and provisions for younger children ascertained, but am at last doomed by general consent to everlasting solitude, and excluded by an irreversible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother, as a man, whose visits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raises hopes only to embitter disappointment, and makes offers only to seduce girls into a waste of that part of life, in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become mistresses and mothers.

I hope you will think, that some part of this penal severity may justly be remitted, when I inform you, that I never yet professed love to a woman without sincere intentions of marriage; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preserve her whom I was leaving from the shock of abruptness, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of seeming to discard me; and that I never forsook a mistress for larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but because I discovered some irregularity in her conduct, or some depravity in her mind; not because I was charmed by another, but because I was offended by herself.

I was very early tired of that succession of amusements by which the thoughts of most young men are dissipated, and had not long glittered in the splendour of an ample patrimony before I wished for the calm of domestic happiness. Youth is naturally delighted with sprightliness and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the sighs of my first affection at the feet of the gay, the sparkling, the vivacious Ferocula. I

fancied to myself a perpetual source of happiness in wit never exhausted, and spirit never depressed; looked with veneration on her readiness of expedients, contempt of difficulty, assurance of address, and promptitude of reply; considered her exempt as by some prerogative of nature from the weakness and timidity of female minds; and congratulated myself upon a companion superior to all common troubles and embarrassments. I was, indeed, somewhat disturbed by the unshaken perseverance with which she enforced her demands of an unreasonable settlement; yet I should have consented to pass my life in union with her, had not my curiosity led me to a crowd gathered in the street, where I found Forocula, in the presence of hundreds, disputing for sixpence with a chairman. I saw her in so little need of assistance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interposition, and I spared myself the shame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot some point of ceremony at our next interview, and soon provoked her to forbid me her presence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philosophy. I had frequently observed the barrenness and uniformity of connubial conversation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and discernment, when I selected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read Misothea, who declared herself the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertness, and puerile levity; and scarcely condescended to make tea, but for the linguist, the geometrician, the astronomer, or the poet. The queen of the Amazons was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in single combat; and Misothea's heart was only to bless the scholar who could overpower her by disputation. Amidst the fondest transports of courtship she could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular syllogism. You may easily imagine, that I wished this courtship at an end; but when I desired her to shorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long conversation, in which Misothea endeavoured to demonstrate the folly of attributing choice and self-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to discover the danger of committing myself for ever to the arms of one who might at any time mistake the dictates of passion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or consider cuckoldom as necessary to the general system, as a link in the everlasting chain of successive causes. I therefore told her, that destiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing should have torn me from her but the talons of necessity.

I then solicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical Sophronia, a lady who considered wit as dangerous, and learning as superfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her house clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a sudden call, inquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of stocks once a week, and purchased every thing at the best market, could want no accomplishments necessary to the happiness of a wise man. She discoursed with great solemnity on the care and vigilance which the superintendence of a family demands; observed how many were ruined by confidence in servants; and told me that she never expected honesty but from a strong chest, and that the best storekeeper was the mistress's eye. Many such oracles of generosity she uttered, and made every day new improvements in her schemes for the regulation of her servants, and the distribution of her time. I was convinced that, whatever I might suffer from Sophronia, I should escape poverty: and we therefore proceeded to adjust the settlements according to her own rule, *fair and softly*. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to intreat my interest for a reconciliation to her mistress, who had turned her out at night for breaking six teeth in a tortoiseshell comb; she had attended her lady from a distant province, and having not lived long enough to save much money, was destitute among strangers, and, though of a good family, in danger of perishing in the streets, or of being compelled by hunger to prostitution. I made no scruple of promising to restore her; but upon my first application to Sophronia, was answered with an air which called for approbation, that if she neglected her own affairs, I might suspect her of neglecting mine; that the comb stood her in three half-crowns; that no servant should wrong her twice; and that indeed she took the first opportunity of parting with Phillida, because, though she was honest, her constitution was bad, and she thought her very likely to fall sick. Of our conference I need not tell you the effect; it surely may be forgiven me, if on this occasion I forgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies, I was disengaged by finding that they entertained my rivals at the same time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our settlements. Another I thought myself justified in forsaking, because she gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another because I could never soften her to tenderness, till she heard that most of my family had died young; and another, because to in-

crease her fortune by expectations, she represented her sister as languishing and consumptive.

I shall in another letter give the remaining part of my history of courtship. I presume that I should hitherto have injured the majesty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

No. 114. SATURDAY, April 20, 1751.

——Judi,
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est. JUV.

——When man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate. DRYDEN.

POWER and superiority are so flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and exposed to danger as they are, scarcely any virtue is so cautious, or any prudence so timorous, as to decline them. Even those that have most reverence for the laws of right, are pleased with showing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wish to pass; and, as the Roman satirist remarks, he that has no design to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terrour, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignity of command to dispute and expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its way into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely be believed to have been produced by public wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of public happiness.

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, "Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than me?" On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those who crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horrour and dejection. For who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief, and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order, and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little success, that rapine and violence are hourly increasing, yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrific punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardons; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that

we can only be rescued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and sanguinary justice.

Yet since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havoc of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, *το των φοβερων δεινοτατον, of dreadful things the most dreadful;* an evil, beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terrour should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands with blood: but when, by the last act of cruelty, no new danger is incurred, and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be observed, that all but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence, proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing, compared with his misery; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates, than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and com-

monly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment; nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I know not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful or less extensive.

If those whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits, they might have escaped all the temptations to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence, and detected they might all have been, had the prosecutors been certain that their lives would have been spared. I believe, every thief will confess, that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured upon capital crimes, because he knew, that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape, than cloud their minds with the horrours of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual, unless some will inform, and some will prosecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death; especially when he remembers, that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of public justice are indeed strong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderness for life. What is punished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be seldom discovered; and multitudes will be suffered to advance from crime to

crime, till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice, that I might reasonably fear to expose it to the public, could it be supported only by my own observations: I shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that attention, which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy.

No. 115. Tuesday, April 23, 1751.

Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis. Juv.

Some faults, tho' small, intolerable grow. Dryden.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I sit down in pursuance of my late engagement to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befel me in my long quest of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been so happy as to obtain it, I have at least endeavoured to deserve, by unwearied diligence, without suffering from repeated disappointments any abatement of my hope, or repression of my activity.

You must have observed in the world a species of mortals who employ themselves in promoting matrimony, and without any visible motive of interest or vanity, without any discoverable impulse of malice or benevolence, without any reason, but that they want objects of attention and topics of conversation, are incessantly busy in procuring wives and husbands. They fill the ears of every single man and woman with some convenient match; and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner for life with the same readiness, and the same indifference, as a salesman, when he has taken measure by his eye, fits his customer with a coat.

It might be expected that they should soon be discouraged from this officious interposition by resentment or contempt; and that every man should determine the choice on which so much of his happiness must depend, by his own judgment and observation: yet it happens, that as these proposals are generally made with a show of kindness, they seldom provoke anger, but are at worst heard with patience, and forgotten.

They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are sure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect: and in more powerful and active understandings they excite curiosity, and sometimes, by a lucky chance, bring persons of similar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by these hymenial solicitors, with whose importunity I was sometimes diverted, and sometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcase; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own scheme, from the success of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleasure of defeating others equally eager, and equally industrious.

An invitation to sup with one of those busy friends, made me, by a concerted chance, acquainted with Camilla, by whom it was expected that I should be suddenly and irresistibly enslaved. The lady, whom the same kindness had brought without her own concurrence into the lists of love, seemed to think me at least worthy of the honour of captivity; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with so much art and spirit, and though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myself irrevocably at the first interview, yet I could not suppress some raptures of admiration, and flutters of desire. I was easily persuaded to make nearer approaches; but soon discovered, that an union with Camilla was not much to be wished. Camilla professed a boundless contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence of her own sex; and very frequently expressed her wonder that men of learning or experience could submit to trifle away life with beings incapable of solid thought. In mixed companies, she always associated with the men, and declared her satisfaction when the ladies retired. If any short excursion into the country was proposed, she commonly insisted upon the exclusion of women from the party; because, where they were admitted, the time was wasted in frothy compliments, weak indulgences, and idle ceremonies. To show the greatness of her mind, she avoided all compliance with the fashion; and, to boast the profundity of her knowledge mistook the various textures of silk, confounded tabbies with damasks, and sent for ribands by wrong names. She despised the commerce of stated visits, a farce of empty form without instruction; and congratulated herself, that she never learned to write message cards. She often applauded the noble sentiments of Plato, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather

than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of Swift's opinion, that women are only a higher species of monkies; and confessed, that when she considered the behaviour, or heard the conversation, of her sex, she could not but forgive the Turks for suspecting them to want souls.

It was the joy and pride of Camilla to have provoked, by this insolence, all the rage of hatred, and all the persecutions of calumny; nor was she ever more elevated with her own superiority, than when she talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, says she, has nature provided that such virulence should be disabled by folly, and such cruelty be restrained by impotence.

Camilla doubtless expected, that what she lost on one side, she should gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made such generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, instead of springing forward to meet her, shrunk back at her approach. She was persecuted by the ladies as a deserter, and at best received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amused myself a while with her fopperies, but novelty soon gave way to detestation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedness of a man without his force, and the ignorance of a woman without her softness; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be entrusted to such audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and soliciting assault.

My next mistress was Nitella, a lady of gentle mien, and soft voice, always speaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from those with whom chance had brought her into company. In Nitella I promised myself an easy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without disturbance or altercation. I therefore soon resolved to address her, but was discouraged from prosecuting my courtship, by observing, that her apartments were superstitiously regular: and that, unless she had notice of my visit, she was never to be seen. There is a kind of anxious cleanliness which I have always noted as the characteristic of a slattern: it is the superfluous scrupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning suspicion: it is the violence of an effort against habit, which, being impelled by external motives, cannot stop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance; and seldom could forbear to discover, by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engrossed: I therefore concluded, that being

only occasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many competitors for the fame of cleanliness, that it is not hard to gain information of those that fail, from those that desire to excel: I quickly found, that Nitella passed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and slippers, when she was not decorated for immediate show.

I was then led by my evil destiny to Charybdis, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myself quickly made happy by permission to attend her to public places; and pleased my own vanity with imagining the envy which I should raise in a thousand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of Charybdis. She soon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which she had never seen. I solicited the happiness of accompanying her, which, after a short reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curiosity on her journey, than after all possible means of expense; and was every moment taking occasion to mention some delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon such notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, she told me, whenever we met, of some new diversion; at night she had notice of a charming company that would breakfast in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of some new song in the opera, some new dress at the playhouse, or some performer at a concert whom she longed to hear. Her intelligence was such, that there never was a show, to which she did not summon me on the second day; and as she hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at some intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we passed the streets, she was often charmed with some trinket in the toyshops; and, from moderate desires of seals and snuff-boxes, rose by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the smile of Charybdis too costly for a private purse, and added one more to six and forty lovers, whose fortune and patience her rapacity had exhausted.

Imperia then took possession of my affections: but kept them only for a short time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having spent the early part of her life in the perusal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of Cleopatra; expected nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands.

Time might indeed cure this species of pride in a mind not naturally undiscerning, and vitiated only by false representations; but the operations of time are slow; and I therefore left her to grow wise at leisure, or to continue in error at her own expense.

Thus I have hitherto, in spite of myself, passed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dress up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the same excellence in corporeal beauty. But surely, Mr. Rambler, it is not madness to hope for some terrestrial lady unstained with the spots which I have been describing; at least, I am resolved to pursue my search; for I am so far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the highest happiness decreed to our present state; and if, after all these miscarriages, I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you shall hear once more from

Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

No. 116. SATURDAY, April 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus. HOR.

Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse would plough.——— FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—I was the second son of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of London. My father having by his marriage freed the estate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his sisters their portions, thought himself discharged from all obligation to further thought, and entitled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasures. He therefore spared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the best guns and horses that the kingdom could supply, paid large salaries to his groom and huntsman, and became the envy of the country for the discipline of his hounds. But, above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and setting-dogs, which by long and vigilant cultivation he had so much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could rest in security; and game of

whatever species, that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten by his shot, or covered with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in the chace, and, at an age when other boys are *creeping like snails unwillingly to school*, he could wind the horn, beat the bushes, bound over the hedges, and swim the rivers. When the huntsman one day broke his leg, he supplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the scut in his hat, amidst the acclamations of the whole village. I being either delicate or timorous, less desirous of honour, or less capable of sylvan heroism, was always the favourite of my mother; because I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles, and did not come home like my brother, mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horse, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amuse herself with books, and being much inclined to despise the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, disdained to learn their sentiments or conversation, and had made no addition to the notions which she had brought from the precincts of Cornhill. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city: enumerating the succession of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at Guildhall; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies' feasts by men, of whom some are now made aldermen, some have fined for sheriffs, and none are worth less than forty thousand pounds. She frequently displayed her father's greatness; told of the large bills which he had paid at sight; of the sums for which his word would pass upon the exchange; the heaps of gold which he used on Saturday night to toss about with a shovel; the extent of his warehouse, and the strength of his doors; and when she relaxed her imagination with lower subjects, described the furniture of their country house, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By these narratives I was fired with the splendour and dignity of London and of trade. I therefore devoted myself to a shop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with inquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me, that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to such honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that *a young man seldom makes much mo-*

ney, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty. They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants' accounts, and the art of regulating books: but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and with great satisfaction to myself bound to a haberdasher.

My master, who had no conception of any virtue, merit or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the main chance; his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of showing it, that, without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with respect by the only men, whose good opinion he valued or solicited, those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

By his instructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and soon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter-bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the riband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and therefore applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critic in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was sometimes consulted by the weavers when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But unhappily, at the first public table to which I was invited appeared a student of the Temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with historical narratives and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed,

essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade and Spaniards; and once attempted, with some warmth, to correct a gross mistake about a silver breast-knot; but neither of my antagonists seemed to think a reply necessary; they resumed their discourse without emotion, and again engrossed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear desirous to know my opinion of her dress, or to hear how long the carnation shot with white, that was then among them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of these gentlemen had more money than myself, I could not discover what had depressed me in their presence; nor why they were considered by others as more worthy of attention and respect; and therefore resolved, when we met again, to rouse my spirit, and force myself into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a small circle very successfully with a minute representation of my lord mayor's show, when the colonel entered careless and gay, sat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and, without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the same attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language; and by one or other the company was so happily amused, that I was neither heard nor seen, nor was able to give any other proof of my existence than that I put round the glass, and was in my turn permitted to name the toast.

My mother indeed endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps these showy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket need not care what any man says of him; that, if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and soldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purse; and that it is fine, when a man can set his hands to his sides, and say he is worth forty thousand pounds every day of the year. These and many more such consolations and encouragements I received from my good mother, which, however, did not much allay my uneasiness; for having by some accident heard, that the country ladies despised her as a cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but considered her as one whose ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a state of meanness and ignominy, from which I could not find any possibility of rising to the rank which my ancestors had always held.

I returned, however, to my master, and busied myself among thread, and silks, and laces, but without my former

cheerfulness and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact disposition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the glossy blackness of my shoes; nor heard with my former elevation those compliments which ladies sometimes condescended to pay me upon my readiness in twisting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of *Young Man*, with which I was sometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my person, and sullen in my temper; often mistook the demands of the customers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and dismissed them with surly silence.

My master was afraid lest the shop should suffer by this change of my behaviour; and, therefore, after some expostulations, posted me in the ware-house, and preserved me from the danger and reproach of desertion, to which my discontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the sixth year of my servitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and with the hearty consent of my master commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me shall be communicated in another letter, by, sir,

Yours, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

No. 117. TUESDAY, April 30, 1751.

Ὄσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλυμπῳ μεμαασαν θεμεν αυταρ ἐπ' Οσσῃ
Πηλιον εἰνοσιφυλλον, ἵν' ὑρανος αμβατος ειη. HOM.

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies;
Heav'd on Olympus tott'ring Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—Nothing has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by

contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven by a burst of laughter, from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silk-worm's thread; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect; or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus, or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fiction by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, ανεμον πνεοντων την ηχω προσκυνει; "when the wind blows, worship its echo." This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates

himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

Quàm juvat immites ventos audire cubantem———
Aut, gelidos hybernus aquas cum fuderit auster,
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi!

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing show'rs!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an eariler writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him:

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quàm munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ.

———'Tis sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supply'd,
And all the magazines of learning fortify'd:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind. DRYDEN.

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established:

Causa latet: res est notissima.

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known. ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aërial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their

voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and, some, yet more visionary, tell us, that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniencies may perhaps all be found in a well chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of an universal practice, there must still be presumed an universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious

below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the points most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniencies of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding, till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimproveable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Arctæus was rational in no other place but in his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the public could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon's house, for the expansion and concentration of un-

derstanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might compose tables of interest at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes, that we may find the heat of Virgil's climate in some lines of his Georgic: so, when I read a composition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe, that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cockloft.

HYPERTATUS.

No. 118. SATURDAY, May 4, 1751.

——Omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte. HOR.

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown. FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his usual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted in his relation of the dream of Scipio, to depreciate those honours for which he himself appears to have panted with restless solicitude, by showing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope for from men is circumscribed.

"You see," says Africanus, pointing at the earth, from the celestial regions, "that the globe assigned to the residence and habitation of human beings is of small dimensions: how then can you obtain from the praise of men, any glory worthy of a wish? Of this little world the inhabited parts are neither numerous nor wide; even the spots where men are to be found are broken by intervening deserts, and the nations are so separated as that nothing can be transmitted from one to another. With the people of the south, by whom the opposite part of the earth is possessed, you have no intercourse: and by how small a tract do you communicate with the countries of the north? The territory which you inhabit

is no more than a scanty island, enclosed by a small body of water, to which you give the name of the great sea and the Atlantic ocean. And even in this known and frequented continent, what hope can you entertain, that your renown will pass the stream of Ganges, or the cliffs of Caucasus? or by whom will your name be uttered in the extremities of the north or south, towards the rising or the setting sun? So narrow is the space to which your fame can be propagated, and even there how long will it remain."

He then proceeds to assign natural causes, why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but short in its duration; he observes the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares that, according to the celestial chronology, no human honours can last a single year.

Such are the objections by which Tully has made a show of discouraging the pursuit of fame; objections which sufficiently discover his tenderness and regard for his darling phantom. Homer, when the plan of his poem made the death of Patroclus necessary, resolved, at least, that he should die with honour; and therefore brought down against him the patron god of Troy, and left to Hector only the mean task of giving the last blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had disabled from resistance. Thus Tully ennobles fame, which he professes to degrade, by opposing it to celestial happiness; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by representing it small in the estimation of superior beings. He still admits it the highest and noblest of terrestrial objects, and alleges little more against it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of these observations conveyed in Ciceronian eloquence to Roman understandings, cannot be determined; but few of those who shall in the present age read my humble version will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquisition of power, have very anxiously inquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the Ganges, or invigorated any effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of Caucasus. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation, and a few years, have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little consideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may

spend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the Atlantic sea.

The numbers to whom real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are inconsiderable; and where neither benefit nor mischief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curiosity; a passion, which, though in some degree universally associated to reason, is easily confined, overborne, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower classes of mankind, there will be found very little desire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of some pressing uneasiness, or the attainment of some near advantage. The Turks are said to hear with wonder a proposal to walk out, only that they may walk back; and inquire why any man should labour for nothing? so those whose condition has always restrained them to the contemplation of their own necessities, and who have been accustomed to look forward only to a small distance, will scarcely understand, why nights and days should be spent in studies, which end in new studies, and which, according to Malherbe's observation, do not tend to lessen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer easily be persuaded, that much pleasure can arise from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their inquiry, of which κλεος οιον ακουομεν ουδε τι ιδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

The truth, is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of Corinna; and the courtier thinks the hour lost, which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour, and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusements, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and inquiry; curiosity may be

equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsman and the man of dress have their heads filled with a fox or a horse-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beside, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as a being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiasts, all those who are placed below the light of fame, and who hear in the vallies of life no voice but that of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, and consider the mention of his name as an usurpation of their time; all who are too much or too little pleased with themselves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown straitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of Caucasus, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a small part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary, that, as Africanus counsels his descendant, "we raise our eyes to higher prospects, and contemplate our future and eternal state, without giving up our hearts to the praise of crowds, or fixing our hopes on such rewards as human power can bestow.

No. 119. Tuesday, May 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra. Hor.

Faults lay on either side the Trojan tow'rs. Elphinston.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—As, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence, will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have never therefore thought those writers friends to human happiness, who endeavour to excite in either sex a general contempt or suspicion of the other. To persuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a suitable associate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous; that they who trust are certainly betrayed, and they who esteem are always disappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but to inflame temerity. Without hope, there can be no caution. Those who are convinced, that no reason for preference can be found, will never harass their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will resolve, since they are doomed to misery, that no needless anxiety shall disturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the crowd, and snatch the first hand that shall be held toward them.

That the world is over-run with vice, cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally escape a greater evil by suffering a less; and therefore, those who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, should be careful to inculcate the possibility of virtue and happiness, and to encourage endeavours by prospects of success.

You, perhaps, do not suspect, that these are the sentiments of one who has been subject for many years to all the hardships of antiquated virginity; has been long accustomed to the coldness of neglect, and the petulance of insult; has been mortified in full assemblies by inquiries after forgotten fashions, games long disused, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the second wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquettes in whispers intended to be heard; and been long considered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wise for pleasure.

It is indeed natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual asperity; yet I have hitherto struggled with so much vigilance against my pride and my resentment, that I have preserved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect sentences against marriage; nor am inclined to lessen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obstructing that happiness which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in censures of the forwardness and indiscretion of girls, or the inconstancy, tastelessness, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition, to which we are not condemned by necessity, but induced by observation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, swells some of those hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to solitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidst the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applause; been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain; and seen my regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a stranger to nuptial happiness, I suffer only the consequences of my own resolves, and can look back upon the succession of lovers, whose addresses I have rejected, without grief, and without malice.

When my name first began to be inscribed upon glasses, I was honoured with the amorous professions of the gay Venustulus, a gentleman, who, being the only son of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonness of expense, and softness of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his person, and easy in his address, and, therefore, soon gained upon my eye at an age when the sight is very little over-ruled by the understanding. He had not any power in himself of gladdening or amusing; but supplied his want of conversation by treats and diversions; and his chief art of courtship was to fill the mind of his mistress with parties, rambles, music, and shows. We were often engaged in short excursions to gardens and seats, and I was for a while pleased with the care which Venustulus discovered in securing me from any appearance of danger, or possibility of mischance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promise the waterman a reward if he landed us safe; and always contrived to return by day-light for fear of robbers. This ex-

traordinary solicitude was represented for a time as the effect of his tenderness for me; but fear is too strong for continued hypocrisy. I soon discovered, that Venustulus had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrours, and he could scarcely refrain from screams and outcries at any accidental surprise. He durst not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainscot, nor cross a field where the cattle were frisking in the sunshine; the least breeze that waved upon the river was a storm, and every clamour in the street was a cry of fire. I have seen him lose his colour when my squirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the sudden entrance of a black cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away with my fan, a beetle that kept him in distress, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own escape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a husband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refusing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unnecessary fears, and flown to me for that succour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was Fungosa, the son of a stock-jobber, whose visits my friends, by the importunity of persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. Fungosa was no very suitable companion; for having been bred in a counting-house, he spoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no desire of any reputation but that of an acute prognosticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raising merriment but by telling how somebody was over-reached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great sobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haste to conclude the match, but was so much awed by my parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the grossness of pedlary, and the jargon of usury, had not a fraud been discovered in the settlement, which set me free from the persecution of grovelling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was afterwards six months without any particular notice, but at last became the idol of the glittering Flosculus, who prescribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleasure the cock of every hat, and the sleeve of every coat that appeared in fashionable assemblies. Flosculus made some impression upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion: he commended my skill in dress, my judgment in suiting colours,

and my art in disposing ornaments. But Flosculus was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be sufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover, or to please with varied praise an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and staid away three days, because I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that Flosculus was rather a rival than an admirer; and that we should probably live in a perpetual struggle of emulous finery, and spend our lives in stratagems to be first in the fashion.

I had soon after the honour at a feast of attracting the eyes of Dentatus, one of those human beings whose only happiness is to dine. Dentatus regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of measures that he had laid for procuring the best cook in France, and entertained me with bills of fare, prescribed the arrangement of dishes, and taught me two sauces invented by himself. At length such is the uncertainty of human happiness, I declared my opinion too hastily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew so cold and negligent, that he was easily dismissed.

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead awhile in triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by discovering that they had no taste or knowledge in music; three I dismissed, because they were drunkards; two, because they paid their addresses at the same time to other ladies; and six, because they attempted to influence my choice by bribing my maid. Two more I discarded at the second visit for obscene allusions; and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I sentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me settlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for representing falsely the value of their estates; three for concealing their debts; and one, for raising the rent of a decrepit tenant.

I have now sent you a narrative, which the ladies may oppose to the tale of Hymenæus. I mean not to depreciate the sex which has produced poets and philosophers, heroes and martyrs; but will not suffer the rising generation of beauties to be rejected by partial satire; or to imagine that those who censured them have not likewise their follies, and their vices. I do not yet believe happiness unattainable in marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an inseparable union. It is necessary to expose faults, that their deformity may be seen; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either

sex to be contemned, because some women, or men, are indelicate or dishonest.

I am, &c.
TRANQUILLA.

No. 120. SATURDAY, May 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri solio Phraaten,
Dissidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus, populumque falsis
——— Dedocet uti
Vocibus. HOR.

True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profest,
Disdains to number with the blest
Phraates, by his slaves ador'd,
And to the Parthian crown restor'd. FRANCIS.

IN the reign of Jenghiz Can, conqueror of the East, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin, the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India, for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin.

At length Nouradin felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physic: they filled his apartments with alexipharmics, restoratives, and essential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languor, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son, and dismissing his attendants, "My son," says he, "behold here the weakness and fragility of man; look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain; the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence beheld me, and sighed: His root, she cried, is fixed in the depths; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast; prudence reclines against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his top. Now, Almamoulin, look upon me withering and prostrate; look upon me, and attend. I have trafficked, I have prospered, I have rioted in gain: my house is splendid, my servants are numerous; yet I displayed only a small part of my riches; the rest, which I was hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden in secret repositories, which this scroll will discover. My purpose was, after ten months more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a safer country; to have given seven years to delight and festivity, and the remaining part of my days to solitude and repentance; but the hand of death is upon me; a frigorific torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am now leaving the produce of my toil, which it must be thy business to enjoy with wisdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into convulsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched a while with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborn with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin's profession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expenses of other young men: he therefore believed, that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want.

He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain and uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself, by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but the princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion and disdained him: How, says she, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestic pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness; every hour was crowded with pleasure; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances,

and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out, "I have at last found the use of riches; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What troubles can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure? What danger can he dread, to whom every man is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly, regaling at his expense; but in the midst of his soliloquy, an officer of justice entered his house, and, in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood a while aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation: yet, unpatronized and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who, after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. "Brother," said the philosopher, "thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes, and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hast taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them, and to expect from them, what experience has now taught thee, that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayest be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain, who stood trembling at Astracan, before a being not naturally superior to himself. That they will not supply exhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless; there are purposes to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them; they may, by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease, still

the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve innocence from oppression, and raise imbecility to cheerfulness and vigour. This they will enable thee to perform, and this will afford the only happiness ordained for the present state, the confidence of divine favour, and the hope of future rewards."

No. 121. Tuesday, May 15, 1751.

O imitatores, servum pecus! Hor.

Away, ye imitators, servile herd! Elphinston.

I have been informed by a letter from one of the universities, that among the youth from whom the next swarm of reasoners is to learn philosophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and sonnets, there are many, who, instead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themselves with the secondary knowledge, which a convenient bench in a coffee-house can supply; and, without any examination or distinction, adopt the criticisms and remarks, which happen to drop from those who have risen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

These humble retailers of knowledge my correspondent stigmatizes with the name of Echoes; and seems desirous that they should be made ashamed of lazy submission, and animated to attempts after new discoveries, and original sentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and severe. For, as they seldom comprehend at once all the consequences of a position, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reasoners are restrained from confidence, they form their conclusions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarrass the question, they expect to find their own opinion universally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and hesitation to want of honesty, rather than of knowledge. I may, perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correspondent, when it shall be found, that I have no inclination to persecute these collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the severity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by hasty censure, I shall not be afraid of taking into protection those whom I think condemned without a sufficient knowledge of their cause.

He that adopts the sentiments of another, whom he has reason to believe wiser than himself, is only to be blamed when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praise and veneration; for, to learn, is the proper business of youth; and whether we increase our knowledge by books or by conversation, we are equally indebted to foreign assistance.

The greater part of students are not born with abilities to construct systems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the schools of art, of being able to comprehend what others discover, and to remember what others teach. Even those to whom Providence hath allotted greater strength of understanding, can expect only to improve a single science. In every other part of learning, they must be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine; and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can seldom add more than some small particle of knowledge to the hereditary stock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thousand intellects.

In science, which, being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than such as arise from new methods of distribution, or new arts of illustration, the necessity of following the traces of our predecessors is indisputably evident; but there appears no reason why imagination should be subject to the same restraint. It might be conceived, that of those who profess to forsake the narrow paths of truth, every one may deviate towards a different point, since, though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diversified. The roads of science are narrow, so that they who travel them, must either follow or meet one another: but in the boundless regions of possibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are surely a thousand recesses unexplored, a thousand flowers unplucked, a thousand fountains unexhausted, combinations of imagery yet unobserved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto described.

Yet, whatever hope may persuade, or reason evince, experience can boast of very few additions to ancient fables. The wars of Troy, and the travels of Ulysses, have furnished almost all succeeding poets with incidents, characters, and sentiments. The Romans are confessed to have attempted little more than to display in their own tongue the inventions of the Greeks. There is, in all their writings, such a perpetual recurrence of allusions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they must be confessed often to want that power of giving pleasure which novelty supplies; nor can we wonder that

they excelled so much in the graces of diction, when we consider how rarely they were employed in search of new thoughts.

The warmest admirers of the great Mantuan poet can extol him for little more than the skill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the Iliad and the Odyssey in one composition: yet his judgment was perhaps sometimes overborn by his avarice of the Homeric treasures; and, for fear of suffering a sparkling ornament to be lost, he has inserted it where it cannot shine with its original splendour.

When Ulysses visited the infernal regions, he found among the heroes that perished at Troy, his competitor, Ajax, who, when the armies of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, died by his own hand in the madness of disappointment. He still appeared to resent, as on earth, his loss and disgrace. Ulysses endeavoured to pacify him with praise and submission; but Ajax walked away without reply. This passage has always been considered as eminently beautiful; because Ajax, the haughty chief, the unlettered soldier, of unshaken courage, of immoveable constancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his assertions by any other argument than the sword, had no way of making his anger known, but by gloomy sullenness and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally shown by silence, more contemptuous and piercing than any words that so rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When Æneas is sent by Virgil to the shades, he meets Dido, the queen of Carthage, whom his perfidy had hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away like Ajax in mute disdain. She turns away like Ajax; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dignity or propriety to silence. She might, without any departure from the tenour of her conduct, have burst out, like other injured women, into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but Virgil had his imagination full of Ajax, and therefore could not prevail on himself to teach Dido any other mode of resentment.

If Virgil could be thus seduced by imitation, there will be little hope that common wits should escape; accordingly we find that, besides the universal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular species of fiction. At one time, all truth was convey-

ed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another, they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some word that makes the burden of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of Spenser, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius, seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and sentiments of Spenser can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the most pleasing vehicles of instruction. But I am very far from extending the same respect to his diction or his stanza. His style was in his own time allowed to be vicious, so darkened with old words and peculiarities of phrase, and so remote from common use, that Jonson boldly pronounces him to have written no language. His stanza is at once difficult and unpleasing; tiresome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at first formed in imitation of the Italian poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The Italians have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive such a stanza as might admit the greatest number of similar rhymes; but our words end with so much diversity, that it is seldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the same sound together. If it be justly observed by Milton, that rhyme obliges poets to express their thoughts in improper terms, these improprieties must always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increased by long concatenations.

The imitators of Spenser are indeed not very rigid censors of themselves, for they seem to conclude that, when they have disfigured their lines with a few obsolete syllables, they have accomplished their design, without considering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced since

the time of Spenser, as the character of Hector is violated by quoting Aristotle in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phrases, though it is easy to sprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the style of Spenser might by long labour be justly copied; but life is surely given us for higher purposes than to gather what our ancestors have wisely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but because it has been forgotten.

No. 122. Saturday, May 18, 1751.

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit. Ovid.

By secret charms our native land attracts.

Nothing is more subject to mistake and disappointment than anticipated judgment concerning the easiness or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performance of others, or from abstracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to be done with ease; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vanishes from observation. We are therefore more powerfully excited to emulation, by those who have attained the highest degree of excellence, and whom we can therefore with least reason hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of success by a previous consideration of the undertaking, we are equally in danger of deceiving ourselves. It is never easy, nor often possible, to comprise the series of any process with all its circumstances, incidents, and variations, in a speculative scheme. Experience soon shows us the tortuosities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of simplicity, and the asperities of smoothness. Sudden difficulties often start up from the ambushes of art, stop the career of activity, repress the gaiety of confidence, and when we imagine ourselves almost at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different measures.

There are many things which we every day see others unable to perform, and perhaps have even ourselves miscarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afresh at every new failure, or to

promise certainty of success to our next essay; but when we try, the same hindrances recur, the same inability is perceived, and the vexation of disappointment must again be suffered.

Of the various kinds of speaking or writing, which serve necessity, or promote pleasure, none appears so artless or easy as simple narration; for what should make him that knows the whole order and progress of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find such as endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digressions and confusion. When we have congratulated ourselves upon a new opportunity of inquiry, and new means of information, it often happens that, without designing either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, the relator fills the ear with empty sounds, harasses the attention with fruitless impatience, and disturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of consequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the same principle, that no writer has a more easy task than the historian. The philosopher has the works of omniscience to examine; and is therefore engaged in disquisitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet trusts to his invention, and is not only in danger of those inconsistencies, to which every one is exposed by departure from truth; but may be censured as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of disposition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy historian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treasure for his use. He has only the actions and designs of men like himself to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconsistency of statesmen, the injustice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety consistent, or uniting probability with surprise, needs not to disturb him; the manners and actions of his personages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leisure to employ all his powers in arranging and displaying them.

Yet, even with these advantages, very few in any age have been able to raise themselves to reputation by writing histories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their ancestors, or undertake to transmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part,

when fashion and novelty have ceased to recommend them, are of no other use than chronological memorials, which necessity may sometimes require to be consulted, but which fright away curiosity, and disgust delicacy.

It is observed that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and, so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have doubted whether an Englishman can stop at that mediocrity of style, or confine his mind to that even tenour of imagination which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding, have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause; and if we have failed in history, we can have failed only because history has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have no historians among us, whom we may venture to place in comparison with any that the neighbouring nations can produce? The attempt of Raleigh is deservedly celebrated for the labour of his researches, and the elegance of his style; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to select facts, rather than adorn them, and has produced an historical dissertation, but seldom risen to the majesty of history.

The works of Clarendon deserve more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itself, nor suited to the purpose of history. It is the effusion of a mind crowded with ideas, and desirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving one clause and sentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude, inartificial majesty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, swells the mind by its plentitude and diffusion. His narration is not perhaps sufficiently rapid, being stopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. But his ignorance or carelessness of the art of writing is amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and policy; the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasonings, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit.

His style, though somewhat secured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation; so that a great part of the world is brought into view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digressions without ostentation. Collateral events are so artfully woven into the contexture of his principal story, that they cannot be disjoined without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor superfluous in his copiousness. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient historians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occasions, are tedious and languid; and since they are merely the voluntary sports of imagination, prove how much the most judicious and skilful may be mistaken, in the estimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have sunk this author in obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the dangers of oblivion, by recounting enterprises and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

No. 123. Tuesday, May 21, 1751.

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu. Hor.

What season'd first the vessel, keeps the taste. Creech.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Though I have so long found myself deluded by projects of honour and distinction, that I often resolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet, how determinately soever

excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or stratagem; and whenever, after the shortest relaxation of vigilance, reason and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in possession, with all her train of pleasures dancing about her.

Even while I am preparing to write a history of disappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that you and your readers are impatient for my performance; and that the sons of learning have laid down several of your late papers with discontent, when they found that Mysocapclus had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the desire of gratifying the expectations that I have raised, is not the only motive of this relation, which having once promised it, I think myself no longer at liberty to forbear. For, however I may have wished to clear myself from every other adhesion of trade. I hope I shall be always wise enough to retain my punctuality, and amidst all my new arts of politeness, continue to despise negligence, and detest falsehood.

When the death of my brother had dismissed me from the duties of a shop, I considered myself as restored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my ancestors obtained. I was, however, embarrassed with many difficulties at my first re-entrance into the world; for my haste to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate measures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old station, was considered by me as an obstruction of my happiness.

It was with no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions still daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices sometimes pulling me by the sleeve as I was walking in the street, and without any terrour of my new sword, which was, notwithstanding, of an uncommon size, inviting me to partake of a bottle. at the old house, and entertaining me with histories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal state. been kept in awe by lace and embroidery; and imagined that, to fright away these unwelcome familiarities, nothing was necessary but that I should, by splendour of dress, proclaim my re-union with a higher rank. I therefore sent for my tailor; ordered a suit with twice the usual quantity of lace; and, that I might not let my persecutors increase their confidence, by the habit of accosting me, staid at home till it was made.

This week of confinement I passed in practising a forbidding frown, a smile of condescension, a slight salutation, and an abrupt departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon

my heel, with so much levity and sprightliness, that I made no doubt of discouraging all public attempts upon my dignity. I therefore issued forth in my new coat, with a resolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter distance; and pleased myself with the timidity and reverence, which I should impress upon all who had hitherto presumed to harass me with their freedoms. But, whatever was the cause, I did not find myself received with any new degree of respect; those whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their usual phrases of benevolence; and those acquaintance I solicited, grew more supercilious and reserved. I began soon to repent the expense by which I had procured no advantage, and to suspect that a shining dress, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itself, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to suffer in my initiation to politeness. I was so much tortured by the incessant civilities of my companions, that I never passed through that region of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at last left my lodgings, and fixed myself in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman just returned from his travels, and was pleased to have my landlord believe that I was in some danger from importunate creditors; but this scheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation sent to offer me, though I had now retired from business, the freedom of my company.

I was now detected in trade, and therefore resolved to stay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my servants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with secret satisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatness and felicity of the esquire; though the conversation seldom ended without some complaint of my covetousness, or some remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the public walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but could not observe, without wonder, as I passed by them, how frequently they were talking of a tailor. I longed, however, to be admitted to conversation, and was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady, whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that as she had often distinguished me for my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects, I indeed sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practise my adscititious character upon another stage, I betook myself to a coffee-house frequented by wits, among whom I learned in a short time the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction, and similies, and contrasts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a sentence have I hissed, which I did not understand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At last a malignant author, whose performance I had persecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon Tape the critic, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My desire to be a fine gentleman still continued: I therefore, after a short suspense, chose a new set of friends at the gaming-table, and was for some time pleased with the civility and openness with which I found myself treated. I was indeed obliged to play; but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never surprised into large sums. What might have been the consequence of long familiarity with these plunderers, I had not an opportunity of knowing: for one night the constables entered and seized us, and I was once more compelled to sink into my former condition, by sending for my old master to attest my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I should aspire, I was summoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to distinguish myself, and to support the honour of my family. I therefore bought guns and horses, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increased the salary of the huntsman. But when I entered the field, it was soon discovered, that I was not destined to the glories of the chace. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marsh; I shivered on the brink of a river while a sportsman crossed it, and trembled at the sight of a five-bar gate. When the sport and danger were over, I was still equally disconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feebly whispering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A fall, by which my ribs were broken, soon recalled me to domestic pleasure, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but wherever I came, there was always some unlucky conversation upon ribands, fillets,

pins, or thread, which drove all my stock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with shame and dejection.

Thus I passed the first ten years after the death of my father, in which I have learned at last to repress that ambition, which I could never gratify; and, instead of wasting more of my life in vain endeavours after accomplishments, which, if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I shall confine my care to those higher excellencies which are in every man's power, and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and ease, hope to secure esteem by honesty and truth.

I am, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

No. 124. SATURDAY, May 25, 1751.

——Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est. HOR.

To range in silence through each healthful wood,
And muse what's worthy of the wise and good.

ELPHINSTON.

THE season of the year is now come, in which the theatres are shut, and the card-tables forsaken; the regions of luxury are for a while unpeopled, and pleasure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to still scenes and erratic gratifications. Those who have passed many months in a continual tumult of diversion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon some new appointment; nor slept at night without a dream of dances, music, and good hands, or of soft sighs and humble supplications; must now retire to distant provinces, where the syrens of flattery are scarcely to be heard, where beauty sparkles without praise or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the most important duties of social benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity, when by timely prevention it may be turned aside, or by preparatory measures be more easily endured, I cannot feel the increasing warmth, or observe the lengthening days, without considering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has so long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accustomed to hope for delight; and who, till fashion proclaims the liberty of returning to the seats of mirth and elegance, must endure the

rugged 'squire, the sober housewife, the loud huntsman, or the formal parson, the roar of obstreperous jollity, or the dullness of prudential instruction; without any retreat, but to the gloom of solitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniencies, and must learn, however unwillingly, to endure themselves.

In winter the life of the polite and gay may be said to roll on with a strong and rapid current; they float along from pleasure to pleasure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and pursue the course of the stream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themselves in progression, and careless whither they are going. But the months of summer are a kind of sleeping stagnation, without wind or tide, where they are left to force themselves forward by their own labour, and to direct their passage by their own skill; and where, if they have not some internal principle of activity, they must be stranded upon shallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, some to whom this universal dissolution of gay societies affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without disgrace, the post which they have found themselves unable to maintain; and of seeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from assemblies where, after a short triumph of uncontested superiority, they are overpowered by some new intruder of softer elegance or sprightlier vivacity. By these, hopeless of victory, and yet ashamed to confess a conquest, the summer is regarded as a release from the fatiguing service of celebrity, a dismission to more certain joys and a safer empire. They now solace themselves with the influence which they shall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the lustre which they shall effuse, when nothing can be seen of brighter splendour. They imagine while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the rustics will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new assembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thousand pleasing expectations swarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with distinctions, honour and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconstancy and desertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to lose four months in inactive obscurity. Many complaints do vexation and desire extort from those exiled tyrants of the town, against the inexorable sun, who pursues his course without any regard to love or beauty;

and visits either tropic at the stated time, whether shunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of public resort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtship, submission, and applause, a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praise of ignorance, and the subjection of weakness, are little regarded by beauties who have been accustomed to more important conquests, and more valuable panegyrics. Nor indeed should the powers which have made havoc in the theatres, or born down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble contest with the ruddy milkmaid.

How then must four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routes, no shows, no ridottos; in which visits must be regulated by the weather, and assemblies will depend upon the moon! The platonists imagine, that the future punishment of those who have in this life debased their reason by subjection to their senses, and have preferred the gross gratifications of lewdness and luxury, to the pure and sublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will arise from the predominance and solicitations of the same appetites, in a state which can furnish no means of appeasing them. I cannot but suspect that this month, bright with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixture of colorific radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infusions of imagery, and the naturalist new scenes of observation; this month will chain down multitudes to the Platonic penance of desire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the highest satisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a state of hopeless wishes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpose, and the hand of avarice shuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tediousness of this melancholy suspension of life, I would willingly preserve those who are exposed to it, only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wisdom or virtue, though they have been dissipated by negligence, or misled by example: and who would gladly find the way to rational happiness, though it should be necessary to struggle with habit and abandon fashion. To these many arts of spending time might be recommended, which would neither sadden the present hour with weariness, nor the future with repentance.

It would seem impossible to a solitary speculatist, that a human being can want employment. To be born in igno-

rance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midst of a world filled with variety, perpetually pressing upon the senses and irritating curiosity, is surely a sufficient security against the languishment of inattention. Novelty is indeed necessary to preserve eagerness and alacrity; but art and nature have stores inexhaustible by human intellects; and every moment produces something new to him, who has quickened his faculties by diligent observation.

Some studies, for which the country and the summer afford peculiar opportunities, I shall perhaps endeavour to recommend in a future essay; but if there be any apprehension not apt to admit unaccustomed ideas, or any attention so stubborn and inflexible, as not easily to comply with new directions, even these obstructions cannot exclude the pleasure of application; for there is a higher and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by him who gave them. The duties of religion, sincerely and regularly performed, will always be sufficient to exalt the meanest, and to exercise the highest understanding. That mind will never be vacant, which is frequently recalled by stated duties to meditations on eternal interests; nor can any hour be long, which is spent in obtaining some new qualification for celestial happiness.

No. 125. Tuesday, May 28, 1751.

Descriptas servare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, poëta salutor? Hor.

But if, through weakness, or my want of art,
I can't to every different style impart
The proper strokes and colours it may claim,
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name? Francis.

It is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous*. Things modified by human understandings, subject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are scarcely to be included in any standing form of expression, because they are always suffering some alteration of their state. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man; every thing is set above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffused in their relations, and the performances of art too inconstant and uncertain, to be reduced to any determi-

nate idea. It is impossible to impress upon our minds an adequate and just representation of an object so great, that we can never take it into our view, or so mutable, that it is always changing under our eye, and has already lost its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no less difficult or uncertain in criticism than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsusceptible of limitations, and impatient of restraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of distinction and burst the enclosures of regularity. There is, therefore, scarcely any species of writing, of which we can tell what is its essence, and what are its constituents; every new genius produces some innovation, which, when invented and approved, subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had established.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers; though perhaps they might properly have contented themselves with declaring it to be *such a dramatic representation of human life, as may excite mirth*, they have embarrassed their definition with the means by which the comic writers attain their end, without considering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be comprised in precept. Thus, some make comedy a representation of mean, and others of bad men; some think that its essence consists in the unimportance, others in the fictitiousness of the transaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatic composition which raises mirth, is comic: and that, to raise mirth, it is by no means universally necessary, that the personages should be either mean or corrupt, nor always requisite, that the action should be trivial, nor ever, that it should be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatic poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, some absurdities might have been prevented, with which the compositions of our greatest poets are disgraced, who, for want of some settled ideas and accurate distinctions, have unhappily confounded tragic with comic sentiments. They seem to have thought, that as the meanness of personages constituted comedy, their greatness was sufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was necessary but that they should crowd the scene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfall of kingdoms, and the rout of armies. They have not considered, that thoughts or incidents, in themselves ridiculous, grow still more grotesque by the solemnity of such characters; and that reason and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is despicable and

absurd, will not, by any association with splendid titles, become rational or great; that the most important affairs, by an intermixture of unseasonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonsense or to folly.

"Comedy," says Horace, "sometimes raises her voice;" and Tragedy may likewise on proper occasions abate her dignity; but as the comic personages can only depart from their familiarity of style, when the more violent passions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy should never descend to trifle, but in the hours of ease, and intermissions of danger. Yet in the tragedy of Don Sebastian, when the king of Portugal is in the hands of his enemy, and having just drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boast that his dust shall take possession of Afric, the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

Muley Moluch. What shall I do to conquer thee?
Seb. Impossible!
Souls know no conquerors.
M. Mol. I'll show thee for a monster thro' my Afric.
Seb. No, thou canst only show me for a man:
Afric is stor'd with monsters; man's a prodigy
Thy subjects have not seen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'st as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou mistak'st:
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Minister. Sure he would sleep.

This conversation, with the sly remark of the minister, can only be found not to be comic, because it wants the probability necessary to representations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonery and farce.

The same play affords a smart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of Sebastian, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat:

——————No more replies,
But see thou dost it; Or——————

To which Dorax answers:

Choak in that threat; I can say Or as loud.

A thousand instances of such impropriety might be produced, were not one scene in Aureng-Zebe sufficient to exemplify it. Indamora, a captive queen, having Aureng-

Zebe for her lover, employs Arimant, to whose charge she had been entrusted, and whom she had made sensible of her charms, to carry her message to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand;* INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the messenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny pursue:
You lay commands both cruel and unjust,
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.
Ind. You first betray'd your trust in loving me:
And should not I my own advantage see?
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain;
You know the rest of your pretences vain.
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.
Arim. I'll to the king, and straight my trust resign.
Ind. His trust you may, but you shall never mine,
Heaven made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confident and friend:
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write;
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it kind.
Arim. *I ask not heav'n my freedom to restore,*—[Reading.
But only for your sake————I'll read no more.
And yet I must————
Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad——[Reading.
Another line like this would make me mad——
Heav'n! she goes on—yet more—and yet more kind!—[*As reading.*
Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night——[Reading.
Thank fortune, who did such a friend provide;
For faithful Arimant shall be your guide.
Not only to be made an instrument,
But pre-engag'd without my own consent!
Ind. Unknown t'engage you, still augments my score,
And gives you scope of meriting the more.
Arim. The best of men
Some int'rest in their actions must confess;
None merit, but in hope they may possess:
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Then, like Bellerophon, my own sentence bear.
Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your best advice:
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you must obey me, soon or late:
Why should you vainly struggle with your fate?
Arim. I thank thee, Heaven! thou hast been wond'rous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery design'd,
And yet am cheated with a free-born mind!
Or make thy orders with my reason suit,
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute—[*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with speed, before
That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient; the contempti-

ble subjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter, only because it ought to have been concealed from him; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expostulations of a voluntary slave; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and free-will; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he cannot persuade his reason to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century which has not debased its most important incidents, and polluted its most serious interlocutions, with buffoonery and meanness; but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licensed. The latter tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. That perpetual tumour of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terrour or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

No. 126. Saturday, June 1, 1751.

——Nihil est aliud magnum quam multa minuta. Vet. Auct.

Sands form the mountain, moments make the year. Young.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Among other topics of conversation which your papers supply, I was lately engaged in a discussion of the character given by Tranquilla of her lover Venustulus, whom, notwithstanding the severity of his mistress, the greater number seemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable timidity.

One of the company remarked that prudence ought to be distinguished from fear; and that if Venustulus was afraid of

nocturnal adventures, no man who considered how much every avenue of the town was infested with robbers, could think him blamable; for why should life be hazarded without prospect of honour or advantage? Another was of opinion, that a brave man might be afraid of crossing the river in the calmest weather, and declared, that for his part, while there were coaches and a bridge, he would never be seen tottering in a wooden case, out of which he might be thrown by any irregular agitation, or which might be overset by accident, or negligence, or by the force of a sudden gust, or the rush of a larger vessel. It was his custom, he said, to keep the security of day-light, and dry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that no wise man ever perished by water, or was lost in the dark.

The next was humbly of opinion, that if Tranquilla had seen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, she would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his safety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not ashamed to confess, that he could not see a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven six times out of his lodgings either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the closet for his servant, whom he called up whenever the enemy was in motion. Another wondered that any man should think himself disgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there was always a possibility that a dog might be mad; and that surely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wisdom in flight than contest. By all these declarations another was encouraged to confess, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addresses to Tranquilla, he should have been likely to incur the same censure; for, among all the animals upon which nature has impressed deformity and horrour, there is none whom he durst not encounter rather than a beetle.

Thus, sir, though cowardice is universally defined too close and anxious an attention to personal safety, there will be found scarcely any fear, however excessive in its degree, or unreasonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterize a coward. Fear is a passion which every man feels so frequently predominant in his own breast, that he is unwilling to hear it censured with great asperity; and, perhaps, if we confess the truth, the same restraint which would hinder a man from declaiming against the frauds of any employment among those who profess it, should withhold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

SIR—Your great predecessor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuse among his female readers a desire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, though you do not seem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to discourage them from any laudable pursuit. But, however either he or you may excite our curiosity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world seems to have formed an universal conspiracy against our understandings; our questions are supposed not to expect answers, our arguments are confuted with a jest, and we are treated like beings who transgress the limits of our nature whenever we aspire to seriousness or improvement.

I inquired yesterday of a gentleman eminent for astronomical skill, what made the day long in summer, and short in winter; and was told that nature protracted the days in summer, lest ladies should want time to walk in the park; and the nights in winter, lest they should not have hours sufficient to spend at the card table.

I hope you do not doubt but I heard such information with just contempt, and I desire you to discover to this great master of ridicule, that I was far from wanting any intelligence which he could have given me. I asked the question with no other intention than to set him free from the necessity of silence, and gave him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms, with a polite assembly, from which, however uneasy, he could not then escape, by a kind introduction of the only subject on which I believed him able to speak with propriety.

I am, &c.

GENEROSA.

No. 127. TUESDAY, June 4, 1751.

Cœpisti melius quam desinis: altima primis
Cedunt: dissimiles hic vir, et ille puer. OVID.

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy;
Thou, who began'st a man wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But, whatever was his intent, it is remarked by Scaliger, that he very little

promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of his life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who, at their first entrance into the world, were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised, and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniencies of old age, which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added the loss of fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable pursuit, may be compared to the progress of a body driven by a blow. It moves for a time with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the first impulse is perpetually decreasing, and, though it should encounter no obstacle capable of quelling it by a sudden stop, the resistance of the medium through which it passes, and the latent inequalities of the smoothest surface, will in a short time, by continued retardation, wholly overpower it. Seme hindrances will be found in every road of life; but he that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a distance, necessarily loses sight of all that fills up the intermediate space, and therefore sets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor suspects a thousand obstacles by which he afterwards finds his passage embarrassed and obstructed. Some are indeed stopt at once in their career by a sudden shock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the cross impulse of some violent passion; but far the greater part languish by slow degrees, deviate at first into slight obliquities, and themselves scarcely perceive at what time their ardour forsook them, or when they lost sight of their original design.

Weariness and negligence are perpetually prevailing by silent encroachments, assisted by different causes, and not observed till they cannot, without great difficulty, be opposed. Labour necessarily requires pauses of ease and relaxation, and the deliciousness of ease commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, perhaps, prevail upon ourselves to renew our attempts, but eagerly listen to every argument for frequent interpositions of amusement; for when indolence has once entered upon the mind, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of industry to be equally endangered by miscarriage and success, by confidence and despondency. He that engages in a great undertaking, with a false opinion of its facility, or too high conceptions of his own strength, is

easily discouraged by the first hindrance of his advances, because he had promised himself an equal and perpetual progression without impediment or disturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the state of a man surprised by a tempest, where he proposed only to bask in the calm, or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprise greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborn by clamour; that, in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled; that others have ceased their curiosity, and consider every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicitly to every report which hatred disseminates or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the public, has in almost every man an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring, and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must quicken the frigid and soften the obdurate, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that when the prospect of reward has vanished, the zeal of enterprise should cease; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren? He who hath pleased himself with anticipated praises, and expected that he should meet in every place with patronage or friendship, will soon remit his vigour, when he finds that, from those who desire to be considered as his admirers, nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuse to own his excellence, lest they should be too justly expected to reward it.

A man, thus cut off from the prospect of that port to which his address and fortitude had been employed to steer him, often abandons himself to chance and to the wind, and glides careless and idle down the current of life, without resolution

to make another effort, till he is swallowed up by the gulph of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the same desertion of themselves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of Hannibal, that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he should know how to use it. The folly of desisting too soon from successful labours, and the haste of enjoying advantages before they are secured, are often fatal to men of impetuous desires, to men whose consciousness of uncommon powers fills them with presumption, and who, having born opposition down before them, and left emulation panting behind, are early persuaded to imagine that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now, being no longer in danger from competitors, they may pass the rest of their days in the enjoyment of their acquisitions, in contemplation of their own superiority, and in attention to their own praises, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not sufficiently considered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accomplish, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who stops at any point of excellence is every day sinking in estimation, because his improvement grows continually more incommensurate to his life. Yet as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himself, they who have once been justly celebrated, imagine that they still have the same pretensions to regard, and seldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorse; for if the spendthrift's poverty be embittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how must the idler's obscurity be clouded by remembring that he once had lustre!

These errours all arise from an original mistake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praises or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applause. But the consideration that life is only deposited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a Master who will regard his endeavours, not his success, would have preserved him from trivial elations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by censure.

No. 128. Saturday, June 8, 1751.

Αἰων δ' ασφαλης
Ουκ εγινετ' ουτ Αιακιδα παρα Πηλει,
Ουτε παρ αντιθεω
Καδμω λεγονται γε μαν βροτων
Ολβον υπερτατον οι
Σχειν. Pind.

For not the brave, or wise, or great,
E'er yet had happiness complete:
Nor Peleus, grandson of the sky,
Nor Cadmus, scap'd the shafts of pain,
Though favour'd by the Pow'rs on high,
With every bliss that man can gain.

The writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestrial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil; that we view only the superficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by secret radiations of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None but those who have learned the art of subjecting their senses as well as reason to hypothetical systems, can be persuaded by the most specious rhetorician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleasures and vexations, that external accidents operate variously upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own sensations, what another would feel in the same circumstances.

If the general disposition of things be estimated by the representation which every one makes of his own estate, the world must be considered as the abode of sorrow and misery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and distresses? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we all are placed in an elysian region, overspread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; since scarcely any complaint is uttered without censure from those that hear it, and almost all are allowed to have obtained a provision at least adequate to their virtue or their under-

standing, to possess either more than they deserve, or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with such dissimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive so many of our ideas and opinions from the state of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind seem to the other hypocrisy, folly, and affectation. Every class of society has its cant of lamentation, which is understood or regarded by none but themselves; and every part of life has its uneasinesses, which those who do not feel them will not commiserate. An event which spreads distraction over half the commercial world, assembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and shakes the nerves of a thousand stockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love, which fills the young breast with incessant alternations of hope and fear, and steals away the night and day from every other pleasure or employment, is regarded by them whose passions time has extinguished, as an amusement, which can properly raise neither joy nor sorrow, and, though it may be suffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, should always give way to prudence or interest.

He that never had any other desire than to fill a chest with money, or to add another manor to his estate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be astonished to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would he gape with curiosity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wish but to speak what was never spoken before; who, if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhaust their patrimonies in treating those who will hear them talk; and if they are poor, neglect opportunities of improving their fortunes, for the pleasure of making others laugh? How slowly would he believe that there are men who would rather lose a legacy than the reputation of a distich; who think it less disgrace to want money than repartee; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a contest of raillery is sometimes sufficient to deprive of sleep; and who would esteem it a lighter evil to miss a profitable bargain by some accidental delay, than not to have thought of a smart reply till the time of producing it was past! How little would he suspect that this child of idleness and frolic enters every assembly with a beating bosom, like a litigant on the day of decision, and revolves the probability of applause with the anxiety of a conspirator, whose fate depends upon the next night; and at the hour of retirement he carries home, under a show of airy negligence, a heart lacerated

with envy, or depressed with disappointment; and immures himself in his closet. that he may disencumber his memory at leisure, review the progress of the day, state with accuracy his loss or gain of reputation, and examine the causes of his failure or success?

Yet more remote from common conceptions are the numerous and restless anxieties, by which female happiness is particularly disturbed. A solitary philosopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and sorrow, lulled in perpetual quiet, and feasted with unmingled pleasure; for, what can interrupt the content of those, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honours, and accumulate immunities; those to whom rudeness is infamy, and insult is cowardice; whose eye commands the brave, and whose smiles soften the severe; whom the sailor travels to adorn, the soldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate; who claim tribute from every art and science, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingness to be pleased?

Surely among these favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must have fixed her residence; they must know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys; their life must always move either to the slow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested which can only be soothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniencies by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please, as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are indeed some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of Catullus wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lap-dogs will be sometimes sick in the present age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains; a pinner, the pride of Brussels, may be

torn by a careless washer; a picture may drop from a watch; or the triumph of a new suit may be interrupted on the first day of its enjoyment, and all distinctions of dress unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the state of every age, every sex, and every condition: all have their cares, either from nature or from folly: and whoever therefore finds himself inclined to envy another, should remember that he knows not the real condition which he desires to obtain, but is certain that, by indulging a vicious passion, he must lessen that happiness which he thinks already too sparingly bestowed.

No. 129. Tuesday, June 11, 1751.

——Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,
Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus, habes.
Possidet terras, et possidet æquora, Minos:
Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Restat iter cælo: cælo tentabimus ire.
Da veniam cæpto, Jupiter alte, meo. Ovid.

Now, Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,
A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand;
Thine Minos, is the main, and thine the land.
The skies are open—let us try the skies:
Forgive, great Jove, the daring enterprise.

Moralists, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeavouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondary knowledge which books afford, and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I discover why else we have been warned only against part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of errour, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topics of moral declamation, may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burdens which she laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

Their remarks are too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated, till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorific wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his understanding; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though therefore danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace; yet it may be justly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger, which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of suicide; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity; and, according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimously confessed: but it is likewise acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten, that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed: the care therefore of all those who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has been generally censured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But

if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of presupposing impossibilities and anticipating frustration, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who, having been taught to confound prudence with temerity, never ventured to excel, lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interest from that of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger; but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confess, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and therefore frequently presumes to attempt what he can never accomplish; but it ought likewise to be remembered, that man is no less ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accomplished a thousand designs, which the prejudices of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that "Power is never far from necessity." The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesitation, when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some resistless passion. We then soon discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of idleness, that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, because we durst not advance to a close examination; and we learn that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure, or perseverance perform.

But, whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or terrour to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have reposed in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to dili-

gence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away despair, cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked, undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add something, however little, every one may hope; and of every honest endeavour, it is certain, that, however unsuccessful, it will be at last rewarded.

No. 130. Saturday, June 15, 1751.

Non sic prata novo vere decentia
Æstatis calidæ dispoliat vapor,
Sævit solstitio cum medius dies; ———
Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis
Momento rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formosi spolium corporis abstulit,
Res est forma fugax. Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili? Seneca.

Not faster in the summer's ray
The spring's frail beauty fades away,
Than anguish and decay consume
The smiling virgin's rosy bloom.
Some beauty's snatch'd each day, each hour;
For beauty is a fleeting flow'r:
Then how can wisdom e'er confide
In beauty's momentary pride? Elphinston.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—You have very lately observed, that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain

and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before other eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds pre-occupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well disposed colours or harmonious sounds can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing or of sight.

I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have on so many occasions discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or, without the help of some female speculatist, be able to understand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face, but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle: she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk, lest I should swell my ancle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution

of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to sleep till I had passed through the cosmetic discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and May-dews; my hair was perfumed with a variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples, and clear discolorations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks; but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that approached me.

My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of natural excellencies as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr. Ariet used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve I was remakable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display in the open world those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties, or domestic assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a public night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position, every friend was consulted about the colour of my dress, and the mantua-makers were harassed with directions and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars have told me of a Spartan matron, who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his shield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion, of equal glory, with a

command to show that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received, like other pleasing novelties, with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes, and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the reptile who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I should seem to give the preference. But having been steadily and industriously instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted with less embarrassment, because my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art; and yet when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a sudden declension of my influence; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement, and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married Lavinia, with less beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened

away those that could make the best settlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philosophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minute-step with a new French dancing-master, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almost completed my nineteenth year; if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of allurement. I was therfore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when, in the midst of my hopes and schemes, I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflection, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty; and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her charms had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

Having thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new course, I shall conclude it in another letter, if, by publishing this, you show any regard for the correspondence of, SIR, &c.

VICTORIA.

No. 131. TUESDAY, June 18, 1751.

——Fatis accede deisque,
Et cole felices; miseros fuge. Sidera cælo
Ut distant, flamma mari, sic utile recto. LUCAN.

Still follow where auspicious fates invite;
Caress the happy, and the wretched slight.
Sooner shall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than interest with right. F. LEWIS.

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, amidst the innumerable varieties of inclination, that nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concur-

ring, than in the wish for riches; a wish indeed so prevalent, that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the desire in which all other desires are included, and of which the various purposes which actuate mankind are only subordinate species and different modifications.

Wealth is the general centre of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberless directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate design, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth, therefore, all unanimously confess the value, nor is there any disagreement but about the use.

No desire can be formed which riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his happiness in splendid equipage or numerous dependents, in refined praise or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curiosities or the revels of luxury, in splendid edifices or wide plantations, must still, either by birth or acquisition, possess riches. They may be considered as the elemental principles of pleasure, which may be combined with endless diversity; as the essential and necessary substance of which only the form is left to be adjusted by choice.

The necessity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almost every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furnished with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth, who can never procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little inquiry will discover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the steeps of

labour; what wisdom and virtue scarcely receive at the close of life, as the recompense of long toil and repeated efforts; is brought within the reach of subtilty and dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious measures; the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falsehood; and the possessions of ignorance and imbecility are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifice, or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover that riches always procure protection for themselves, that they dazzle the eyes of inquiry, divert the celerity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestably known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to inquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption. but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterwards supported by favour, and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the certainty of obtaining by every accession of advantage an addition of security, have so far prevailed upon the passions of mankind, that the peace of life is destroyed by a general and incessant struggle for riches. It is observed of gold, by an old epigrammatist, that *to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in sorrow.* There is no condition which is not disquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political estimate between those who are practising fraud, and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present state of the world, it will be found that all confidence is lost among mankind, that no man ventures to act, where money can be endangered upon the faith of another. It is impossible to see the long scrolls in which every contract is concluded, with all their appendages of seals and attestations, without wondering at the depravity of those beings, who must be restrained from violation of promise by such formal and public evidences, and precluded from equivocation and subterfuge by such punctilious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly and wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe with a bond or a settlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the first view irreconcileable with the laws of virtue; some are openly flagitious, and practised not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and justice; and the rest are on every side so entangled with dubious tenden-

cies, and so beset with perpetual temptations, that very few even of those who are not yet abandoned, are able to preserve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteristics of the Golden Age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of possessions: strife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent passion was stilled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but such times can return no more. Community of possession must include spontaneity of production; for what is obtained by labour will be of right the property of him by whose labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleasure or to affluence must be procured either by slow industry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incite to more safe and more speedy methods, who strive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to share the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In the latter ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is exposed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have suppressed desire by cutting off the possibility of gratification, and secured peace by destroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet subjection. But, by debarring themselves from evil, they have rescinded many opportunities of good; they have too often sunk into inactivity and uselessness; and though they have forborn to injure society, have not fully paid their contributions to its happiness.

While riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual impulse of covetousness by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance, when weighed only against reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the opposite scale is charged with justice, veracity, and piety.

No. 132. Saturday, June 22, 1751.

——Dociles imitandis
Tarpibus ac pravis omnes sumus.—— Juv.

The mind of mortals in perverseness strong,
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Mr. Rambler—I was bred a scholar, and after the usual course of education, found it necessary to employ for the support of life that learning which I had almost exhausted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative professions drew my regard with equal attraction; each presented ideas which excited my curiosity, and each imposed duties which terrified my apprehension.

There is no temper more unpropitious to interest than desultory application and unlimited inquiry, by which the desires are held in a perpetual equipoise, and the mind fluctuates between different purposes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often spent the first hours of the day, in considering to what study I should devote the rest; and at last snatched up any author that lay upon the table, or perhaps fled to a coffee-house for deliverance from the anxiety of irresolution, and the gloominess of solitude.

Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly less, till I was roused from my literary slumber by a creditor, whose importunity obliged me to pacify him with so large a sum, that what remained was not sufficient to support me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myself in danger of distress, and obliged to endeavour after some certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their last acre in a drawer, and, without the least interruption of their tranquillity, or abatement of their expenses, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to such dignity of imprudence, or such exaltation above the cares and necessities of life: I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might set me free from

the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out some final scheme of lasting advantage.

My friends were struck with honest solicitude, and immediately promised their endeavours for my extrication. They did not suffer their kindness to languish by delay, but prosecuted their inquiries with such success, that in less than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of prospects.

I had however no time for long pauses of consideration; and therefore soon resolved to accept the office of instructing a young nobleman in the house of his father: I went to the seat at which the family then happened to reside, was received with great politeness, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were such as I should willingly have accepted, though my fortune had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the respect with which I was treated, flattered my vanity; and perhaps the splendour of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the proposals, and received the young lord into my care.

Having no desire to gain more than I should truly deserve, I very diligently prosecuted my undertaking, and had the satisfaction of discovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehension, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wise and useful counsellor to the state, though my labours were somewhat obstructed by want of authority, and the necessity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man, whose imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a studious life had made all the common amusements insipid and contemptible, it was not very easy to suppress his indignation, when he saw himself forsaken in the midst of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an insect, and found his instructions debarred from access to the intellectual faculties, by the memory of a childish frolic, or the desire of a new plaything.

Those vexations would have recurred less frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he should be excused from a task as a reward for some petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another, to gratify herself or her visitants with his vivacity, shown him that every thing was more pleasing and more important than knowledge, and that study was to be endured rather than chosen, and was only the business of those hours which pleasure left vacant or discipline usurped.

I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of these frequent avocations; but was answered, that rank and fortune might reasonably hope for some indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progress would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; and that with the success which satisfied every body else, I might surely satisfy myself. I had now done my duty, and without more remonstrances continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they could be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my scholar began to feel the quick impulses of curiosity, and the honest ardour of studious ambition.

At length it was resolved to pass a winter in London. The lady had too much fondness for her son to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuse her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the public. I remonstrated against too early an acquaintance with cards and company; but with a soft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, she said that he had been already confined too long to solitary study, and it was now time to show him the world; nothing was more a brand of meanness than bashful timidity; gay freedom and elegant assurance were only to be gained by mixed conversation, a frequent intercourse with strangers, and a timely introduction to splendid assemblies; and she had more than once observed, that his forwardness and complaisance began to desert him, that he was silent when he had not something of consequence to say, blushed whenever he happened to find himself mistaken, and hung down his head in the presence of the ladies, without the readiness of reply, and activity of officiousness remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in London.

Again I found resistance hopeless, and again thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayest and most magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for several years lived at a remote seat, was immediately dazzled with a thousand beams of novelty and show. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleasure that passed before him, and it was impossible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the sounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was disturbed by a rich suit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accustomed to a plain dress, he could not at first survey without ecstacy.

The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more dis-

tant acquaintances to the door; and my pupil was indiscriminately introduced to all, that he might accustom himself to change of faces, and be rid with speed of his rustic diffidence. He soon endeared himself to his mother by the speedy acquisition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes sparkle at a numerous assembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other test of principles or actions than the quality of those to whom they are ascribed. He begins already to look down on me with superiority, and submits to one short lesson in a week, as an act of condescension rather than obedience; for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot speak French; and having formerly learned a few familiar phrases from his sister's governess, he is every day soliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his conversation. I am not yet insulted, but find myself likely to become soon a superfluous incumbrance, for my scholar has now no time for science, or for virtue: and the lady yesterday declared him so much the favourite of every company, that she was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

No. 133. TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1751.

Magna quidem sacris quae dat praecepta libellis
Victrix fortunae sapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitae,
Nec jactare jugum vita didicere magistra. JUV.

Let Stoics ethics, haughty rules advance
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance:
Yet happy those, though not so learn'd are thought,
Whom life instructs, who by experience taught,
For new to come from past misfortunes look,
Nor shake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis shook. CHERCE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—You have shown, by the publication of my letter, that you think the life of Victoria not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philosopher: I shall therefore continue my narrative, without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my strength was recovered as enabled me to bear the

agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstacy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thousand trifling inquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemn me to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance, admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new skin. The cosmetic science was exhausted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me rest at last, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune she considered as a hopeless game, no longer worthy of solicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the sudden blasts of disease wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed sufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that filled her days with pleasure, and her nights with hope; all that gave gladness to the present hour, or brightened her prospects of futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of a man whose attention has been divided by diversity of pursuits, and who has not been accustomed to derive from others much of his happiness, to image to himself such helpless destitution, such dismal in-

anity. Every object of pleasing contemplation is at once snatched away, and the soul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent desire; the faculties of anticipation slumber in despondency, or the powers of pleasure mutiny for employment.

I was so little able to find entertainment for myself, that I was forced in a short time to venture abroad, as the solitary savage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of disgrace into assemblies, where I had lately sparkled with gaiety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence: but the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practise the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered, when the eyes were no langer engaged against the judgment; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long considered all who approached me as vassals condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was in less than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation; to catch with eagerness at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependence, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfall was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by some I have been told in express terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that

would smooth the skin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own; and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well-bred malignity; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude, whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance, and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day rose upon me without an engagement: and the evening closed in its natural gloom, without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to melancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than to receive assistance. "We must distinguish," said she, "my Victoria, those evils which are imposed by Providence, from those to which we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of your calamity, a small part is the infliction of Heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion of idle discontent. You have lost that which may indeed sometimes contribute to happiness, but to which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of the human race never have possessed; what those on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess in vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew not how to use: you have only lost early what the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and while you have time to substitute more valuable and more durable excellencies. Consider

yourself, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to reason, and to act; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you will find that there are other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools."

I am, Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

No. 134. SATURDAY, June, 29, 1751.

Quis scit, an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summæ
Tempora Di superi! HOR.

Who knows if Heav'n, with ever-bounteous pow'r,
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour? FRANCIS.

I SAT yesterday morning employed in deliberating on which among the various subjects that occurred to my imagination, I should bestow the paper of to-day. After a short effort of meditation by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irresolute, my ideas wandered from the first intention, and I rather wished to think, than thought, upon any settled subject; till at last I was awakened from this dream of study by a summons from the press: the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purposing to provide, and, however dubious or sluggish, I was now necessitated to write.

Though to a writer whose design is so comprehensive and miscellaneous, that he may accommodate himself with a topic from every scene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his task to be obliged to a sudden composition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself for having so long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleness increased the difficulty. There was however some pleasure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was necessary, might still congratulate myself upon my superiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or resolution recover the opportunities which have slipped away: and who are condemned by their own carelessness to hopeless calamity and barren sorrow.

The folly of allowing ourselves to delay what we cannot finally escape, is one of the general weaknesses, which, in spite of the instruction of moralists, and the remonstances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind;

even they who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of their passions, always renewing its attacks, and, though often vanquished never destroyed.

It is indeed natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is by its nearness enabled to make the strongest impressions. When therefore any sharp pain is to be suffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want; and are easily persuaded, that the moment of necessity, which we desire never to arrive, is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolutions which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely hope to keep, and reconciling ourselves to our own cowardice by excuses, which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is, by the continual contemplation of misery, hourly impaired; every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waste that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but even where procrastination produces no absolute increase of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrours. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wise to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and suffer only their real malignity, without the conflicts of doubt, and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer; yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetic punishment, was somewhat to be pitied, because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneasiness which only vacancy and suspicion expose them to feel, and complaints of distresses which it is in their own power to remove. Laziness is commonly associated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infusing despair of success; or the frequent failure of irresolute strug-

gles, and the constant desire of avoiding labour, impress by degrees false terrours on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full possession of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon visions of calamity, such as, if they are not dissipated by useful employment, will soon overcast it with horrours, and embitter life not only with those miseries by which all earthly beings are really more or less tormented, but with those which do not yet exist, and which can only be discerned by the perspicacity of cowardice.

Among all who sacrifice future advantage to present inclination, scarcely any gain so little as those that suffer themselves to freeze in idleness. Others are corrupted by some enjoyment of more or less power to gratify the passions; but to neglect our duties merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is surely to sink under weak temptations. Idleness never can secure tranquillity; the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard; and though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from sleep. Those moments which he cannot resolve to make useful by devoting them to the great business of his being, will still be usurped by powers that will not leave them to his disposal; remorse and vexation will seize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is so desirous to appropriate.

There are other causes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute discernment. He to whom many objects of pursuit arise at the same time, will frequently hesitate between different desires till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities, and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage, and possibilities of improvement, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He

that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and study Palladio, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and, since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true that no diligence can ascertain success; death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honest undertaking, has at least the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he missed the victory.

No. 135. Tuesday, July 2, 1751.

Cælum, non animum mutant. Hor.

Place may be chang'd; but who can change his mind?

It is impossible to take a view on any side, or observe any of the various classes that form the great community of the world, without discovering the influence of example; and admitting with new conviction the observation of Aristotle, that "man is an imitative being." The greater, far the greater number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curiosity after new discoveries, or ambition of trusting themselves to their own conduct. And, of those who break the ranks and disorder the uniformity of the march, most return in a short time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and steady satisfaction of security before the frolics of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In questions difficult or dangerous it is indeed natural to repose upon authority, and, when fear happens to predominate, upon the authority of those whom we do not in general think wiser than ourselves. Very few have abilities requisite for the discovery of abstruse truth; and of those few some want leisure, and some resolution. But it is not so easy to find the reason of the universal submission to precedent

where every man might safely judge for himself; where no irreparable loss can be hazarded, nor any mischief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful passions are not awakened; the mere pleasure of acknowledging no superior might produce slight singularities, or the hope of gaining some new degree of happiness awaken the mind to invention or experiment.

If in any case the shackles of prescription could be wholly shaken off, and the imagination left to act without controul, on what occasion should it be expected, but in the selection of lawful pleasure? Pleasure, of which the essence is choice; which compulsion dissociates from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the smiles of liberty. Yet we see that the senses, as well as the reason, are regulated by credulity; and that most will feel, or say that they feel, the gratification which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of universal migration, when almost every one, considerable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earnestness of distress to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of speedy departure, or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted to inquire what happiness is to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this stated recession? Of the birds of passage, some follow the summer and some the winter, because they live upon sustenance which only summer or winter can supply; but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to assign the reason, because they do not appear either to find or seek any thing which is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of these fugitives may have heard of men whose continual wish was for the quiet of retirement, who watched every opportunity to steal away from observation, to forsake the crowd, and delight themselves with *the society of solitude*. There is indeed scarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happiness of rural privacy, and delighted himself and his reader with the melody of birds, the whisper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets; nor any man eminent for extent of capacity, or greatness of exploits, that has not left behind him some memorials of lonely wisdom, and silent dignity.

But almost all absurdity of conduct arises from the imitation of those whom we cannot resemble. Those who thus testified their weariness of tumult and hurry, and hasted with so much eagerness to the leisure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the pressure of difficult employments, ha-

rassed with importunities, and distracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engrossed by speculative sciences, who, having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their searches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reasonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reasonably fly to that ease and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The statesman who devoted the greater part of his time to the public, was desirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general, ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and stunned with acclamations, gladly snatched an interval of silence and relaxation. The naturalist was unhappy were the works of Providence were not always before him. The reasoner could adjust his systems only where his mind was free from the intrusion of outward objects.

Such examples of solitude very few of those who are now hastening from the town, have any pretensions to plead in their own justification, since they cannot pretend either weariness of labour, or desire of knowledge. They purpose nothing more than to quit one scene of idleness for another, and, after having trifled in public, to sleep in secresy. The utmost that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculousness to obscurity, and the privilege of having fewer witnesses to a life of folly. He who is not sufficiently important to be disturbed in his pursuits, but spends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or desires, can have nothing to demand of shades and valleys. As bravery is said to be a panoply, insignificancy is always a shelter.

There are, however, pleasures and advantages in a rural situation, which are not confined to philosophers and heroes. The freshness of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhausted variety which summer scatters upon the earth, may easily give delight to an unlearned spectator. It is not necessary that he who looks with pleasure on the colours of a flower should study the principles of vegetation, or that the Ptolemaic and Copernican system should be compared before the light of the sun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itself a source of gratification; and Milton justly observes that to him who has been long pent up in cities, no rural object can be presented which will not delight or refresh some of his senses.

Yet even these easy pleasures are missed by the greater part of those who waste their summer in the country. Should any man pursue his acquaintances to their retreats,

he would find few of them listening to Philomel, loitering in woods; or plucking daises, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruscations of declining day. Some will be discovered at a window by the road-side, rejoicing when a new cloud of dust gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary supply of conversation, and a short relief from the tediousness of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houses as in the rest of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new street in London might have given them. The same set of acquaintances still settle together, and the form of life is not otherwise diversified than by doing the same things in a different place. They pay and receive visits in the usual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the same tattle, and dance with the same partners; nor can they, at their return to their former habitation, congratulate themselves on any other advantage, than that they have passed their time like others of the same rank: and have the same right to talk of the happiness and beauty of the country, of happiness which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to subsist upon its own stock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are indeed understandings so fertile and comprehensive, that they can always feed reflection with new supplies, and suffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amusements; as some cities have within their own walls enclosed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a siege. But others live only from day to day, and must be constantly enabled, by foreign supplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and stupidity. Such could not indeed be blamed for hovering within reach of their usual pleasure, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not those who go into the country, merely because they dare not be left alone at home, boast their love of nature, or their qualifications for solitude; nor pretend that they receive instantaneous infusions of wisdom from the Dryads, and are able, when they leave smoke and noise behind, to act, or think, or reason for themselves.

No. 136. Saturday, July 6, 1751.

> Ἐχθρος γαρ μοι κεινος ομως αιδαο πυλησιν,
> Ος χ' ετερον μιν κευθει ενι φρεσιν, αλλο δε βαζει. Homer.
>
> Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
> My heart detests him as the gates of Hell. Pope.

The regard which they whose abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the rest of mankind, arises in a great measure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by misers or by robbers; but the honours of a lasting name, and the veneration of distant ages, only the sons of learning have the power of bestowing. While, therefore, it continues one of the characteristics of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly overlooked in the search after happiness, nor become contemptible, but by their own fault.

The man who considers himself as constituted the ultimate judge of disputable characters, and entrusted with the distribution of the last terrestrial rewards of merit, ought to summon all his fortitude to the support of his integrity, and resolve to discharge an office of such dignity with the most vigilant caution and scrupulous justice. To deliver examples to posterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no slight or trivial undertaking; nor is it easy to commit more atrocious treason against the great republic of humanity, than by falsifying its records and misguiding its decrees.

To scatter praise or blame without regard to justice, is to destroy the distinction of good and evil. Many have no other test of actions than general opinion: and all are so far influenced by a sense of reputation, that they are often restrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have lost their power; nor can any species of prostitution promote general depravity more than that which destroys the force of praise, by showing that it may be acquired without deserving it, and which, by setting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets loose the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatness is controlled.

Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raise expectation, or animate enterprise. It is

therefore not only necessary, that wickedness, even when it is not safe to censure it, be denied applause, but that goodness be commended only in proportion to its degree: and that the garlands due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not suffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boast only petty services and easy virtues.

Had these maxims been universally received, how much would have been added to the task of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhausted. How few of these initial panegyrics had appeared, if the author had been obliged first to find a man of virtue, then to distinguish the species and degree of his desert, and at last to pay him only the honours which he might justly claim. It is much easier to learn the name of the last man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of some of his domestics the privilege of addressing him, or, in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an address without any previous solicitation; and, after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philosophy has assigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly said, did not the fear of giving pain to his modesty repress the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has so much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiscuous dedication: for what credit can he expect who professes himself the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and, without shame or scruple, celebrates the worthless, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppressive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and loveliness to innocence? Every other kind of adulation, however shameful, however mischievous, is less detestable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the stamp of literary sanction upon the dross and refuse of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo, partakes the guilt of murder, why should he who bribes a flatterer, hope to be exempted from the shame of falsehood? The unhappy dedicator is seldom without some motives which obstruct, though not destroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppressed by miseries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a short gratification, with which nothing but stupidity could dispose him to be pleased. The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by

showing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach; the celebration of those virtues which we feel ourselves to want, can only impress a quicker sense of our own defects, and show that we have not yet satisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to observe how much fiction must contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet sometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiast has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapless author, when his book, and perhaps his dedication was ready for the press, has waited long before any one would pay the price of prostitution, or consent to hear the praises destined to insure his name against the casualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented against the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parsimonious prudence has declined expense, or honest indignation rejected falsehood. But if at last, after long inquiry and innumerable disappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taste, a statesman desirous of knowing how a friendly historian will represent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world some memorial of her wit and beauty, such weakness cannot be censured as an instance of enormous depravity. The wisest man may, by a diligent solicitor, be surprised in the hour of weakness, and persuaded to solace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the music of flattery.

To censure all dedications as adulatory and servile, would discover rather envy than justice. Praise is the tribute of merit, and he that has incontestably distinguished himself by any public performance, has a right to all the honours which the public can bestow. To men thus raised above the rest of the community, there is no need that the book or its author should have any particular relation: that the patron is known to deserve respect, is sufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the same regard from particular persons, private virtue and less conspicuous excellence may be sometimes entitled. An author may with great propriety inscribe his work to him by whose encouragement it was undertaken, or by whose liberality he has been enabled to prosecute it, and he may justly rejoice in his own fortitude, that dares to rescue merit from obscurity.

Scribus exemplis videor te cludere: misce
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus.——

Thus much I will indulge thee for thy ease,
And mingle something of our times to please. DRYDEN jun.

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblamably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praises only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatness, be cautious lest his desire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to please ourselves with the future than the past, and, while we luxuriate in expectation, may be easily persuaded to purchase what we yet rate, only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views of personal regard can discharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life, that a good man may receive favours from one, who, notwithstanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be justly proposed to the imitation of others, and whom therefore he must find some other way of rewarding than by public celebrations. Self-love has indeed many powers of seducement, but it surely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective body of mankind, or persuade him that a benefit conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many, upon false principles of gratitude, have ventured to extol wretches, whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the species, and whom they would likewise have beheld with the same scorn, had they not been hired to dishonest approbation.

To encourage merit with praise, is the great business of literature; but praise must lose its influence, by unjust or negligent distribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with misapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with squandering on guilt the recompense of virtue.

No. 137. Tuesday, July 9, 1751.

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt. Hor.

——Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme. Creech.

That wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention, with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect, ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and

investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which lasts only while the understanding is fixed upon some single idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the last consequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labour of inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment, without any effort to animate inquiry, or dispel obscurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they therefore content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, and resign the pleasure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious study or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanic art, many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other, that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands, that, in succession to each other, contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeness and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyze them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the most active and vigourous intellect; but of which every member is separately weak, and which may therefore be quickly subdued, if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The widest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated; the most

lofty fabrics of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labour, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might with greatest reason promise themselves victory, are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness, or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views, such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance, or the eminences of fame ascended without labour, is to expect a particular privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence, or the heights inaccessible to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes in literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings, perhaps, some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself; and therefore doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much distrust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themselves. Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools, as giving the last perfection to human abilities, are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction: and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of

education, which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

Books, says Bacon, *can never teach the use of books*. The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastic professions, and passed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to disregard every other qualification. and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction. They therefore step out from their cells into the open world with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and scorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider that, though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given. nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions, about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions, may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments, and tender officiousness; and therefore, no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed. as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be lost: for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination, he remits his splendour but retains his magnitude, and pleases more though he dazzles less.

No. 138. Saturday, July 13, 1751.

——O tantum libeat mecum tibi sordida rura
Atque humiles habitare casas, et figere cervos. Virg.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural sports.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Though the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and busy part of mankind, is justified by daily observation, since most of those who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I suppose you do not intend to represent the practice itself as ridiculous, or to declare that he whose condition puts the distribution of his time into his own power may not properly divide it between the town and country.

That the country, and only the country, displays the inexhaustible varieties of nature, and supplies the philosophical mind with matter for admiration and inquiry, never was denied; but my curiosity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an insect, or the structure of a nest; I am generally employed upon human manners, and therefore fill up the months of rural leisure with remarks on those who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more frequently visit those regions of negligence and liberty, they might diversify their representations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute discriminations which distinguish one from another are for the most part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiscuous converse, as angular bodies and uneven surfaces lose their points and asperities by frequent attrition against one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of

fashion, the influence of example, the desire of applause, and the dread of censure, obstruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its first efforts to break forth into the experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are so strong as to grow up into habits, when they must struggle with the constant opposition of settled forms and established customs. But in the country every man is a separate and independent being: solitude flatters irregularity with hopes of secrecy; and wealth, removed from the mortification of comparison, and the awe of equality, swells into contemptuous confidence, and sets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulses of nature act unrestrained, and the disposition dares to show itself in its true form, without any disguise of hypocrisy, or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to please himself, without inquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or considering others as entitled to any account of his sentiments or actions. If he builds or demolishes, opens or encloses, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the opinion of those who are skilled in perspective or architecture, it is sufficient that he has no landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor spends his own money on his own grounds.

For this reason it is not very common to want subjects for rural conversation. Almost every man is daily doing something which produces merriment, wonder, or resentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from restraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and suffers the natural character to diffuse itself to every part of life. The pride which, under the check of public observation, would have been only vented among servants and domestics, becomes in a country baronet the torment of a province, and, instead of terminating in the destruction of China-ware and glasses, ruins tenants, dispossesses cottagers, and harasses villagers with actions of trespass and bills of indictment.

It frequently happens that, even without violent passions, or enormous corruption, the freedom and laxity of a rustic life produce remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now reside, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the same cut and colour; another for shaking hands with those that visit her; and a third for unshaken resolutions never to let tea or coffee enter her house.

But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none so worthy of attention as that of Mrs. Busy, a widow, who lost her husband in her thirtieth year, and has since passed her time at the manor-house in the government of her children, and the management of the estate.

Mrs. Busy was married at eighteen from a boarding-school, where she had passed her time, like other young ladies, in needle-work, with a few intervals of dancing and reading. When she became a bride she spent one winter with her husband in town, where, having no idea of any conversation beyond the formalities of a visit, she found nothing to engage her passions; and when she had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and seen the Monument, the Tombs, and the Tower, she concluded that London had nothing more to show, and wondered that when women had once seen the world they could not be content to stay at home. She therefore went willingly to the ancient seat, and for some years studied housewifery under Mr. Busy's mother, with so much assiduity, that the old lady when she died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a soup-dish, two beakers, and a chest of table-linen spun by herself.

Mr. Busy, finding the economical qualities of his lady, resigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never visited his estates, but to destroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed such devastations in the rage of pleasure, that some of his tenants refused to hold their lands at the usual rent. Their landlady persuaded them to be satisfied, and entreated her husband to dismiss his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drank by his companions, and corn consumed by the horses, and remonstrances against the insolence of the huntsman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntsman was too necessary to his happiness to be discarded; and he had still continued to ravage his own estate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by shooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a consumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

Mrs. Busy was too much an economist to feel either joy or sorrow at his death. She received the compliments or consolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which she stole privately every night and morning to see the cows milked; and, after a few days, declared that she thought a widow might employ herself better than in nursing grief; and that, for her part, she was resolved the fortunes of her children should not be impaired by her neglect.

She therefore immediately applied herself to the reformation of abuses. She gave away the dogs, discharged the servants of the kennel and stable, and sent the horses to the next fair, but rated at so high a price that they returned unsold. She was resolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They lost their sleekness and grace, and were soon purchased at half the value.

She soon disencumbered herself from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a course apron, and short petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which she takes the management wholly upon herself. She rises before the sun to order the horses to their geers, and sees them well rubbed down at their return from work; she attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nursed; she walks out among the sheep at noon, counts the lambs, and observes the fences, and, where she finds a gap, stops it with a bush till it can be better mended. In harvest she rides a-field in the wagon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leisure hours she looks goose eggs, airs the wool room, and turns the cheese.

When respect or curiosity brings visitants to her house, she entertains them with prognostics of a scarcity of wheat, or a rot among the sheep, and always thinks herself privileged to dismiss them, when she is to see the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the roost.

The only things neglected about her are her children, whom she has taught nothing but the lowest household duties. In my last visit I met Miss Busy carrying grains to a sick cow, and was entertained with the accomplishments of her eldest son, a youth of such early maturity, that, though he is only sixteen, she can trust him to sell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though somewhat tanned in making hay, was busy in pouring out ale to the ploughmen, that every one might have an equal share.

I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed by the absurd prudence of their mother, to ignorance and meanness; but when I recommended a more elegant education, was answered, that she never saw bookish or finical people grow rich, and that she was good for nothing till she had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-school.

I am yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

No. 139. Tuesday, July 16, 1751.

——*Sit quod vis simplex dumtaxat et unum.* Hor.

Let every piece be simple and be one.

It is required by Aristotle to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally necessary to every other species of regular composition, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning," says he, "is that which hath nothing necessarily previous, but to which that which follows is naturally consequent; the end, on the contrary, is that which by necessity, or at least according to the common course of things, succeeds something else, but which implies nothing consequent to itself; the middle is connected on one side to something that naturally goes before, and on the other to something that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critic, for the disposition of the different parts of a well constituted fable. It must begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repose, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate passages must join the last effect to the first cause, by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing must be therefore inserted which does not apparently arise from something foregoing, and properly make way for something that succeeds it.

This precept is to be understood in its rigour only with respect to great and essential events, and cannot be extended in the same force to minuter circumstances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy, as they contribute more to the main design; for it is always a proof of extensive thought and accurate circumspection, to promote various purposes by the same act; and the idea of an ornament admits use, though it seems to exclude necessity.

Whoever purposes, as it is expressed by Milton, "to build the lofty rhyme," must acquaint himself with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be solid as well as beautiful; that nothing stand single or independent, so as that it may be taken away without injuring the rest; but that, from the foundation to the pinnacles, one part rest firm upon another.

This regular and consequential distribution is, among common authors, frequently neglected; but the failures of those,

whose example can have no influence, may be safely overlooked, nor is it of much use to recall obscure and unregarded names to memory for the sake of sporting with their infamy. But if there be any writer whose genius can embellish impropriety, and whose authority can make errour venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquisition. To expunge faults where there are no excellencies, is a task equally useless with that of the chemist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

The tragedy of Samson Agonistes has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of Paradise Lost, and opposed, with all the confidence of triumph, to the dramatic performances of other nations. It contains indeed just sentiments, maxims of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is a just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensable laws of Aristotelian criticism: and, omitting at present all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts necessary to be known:

Samson. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun and shade;
There I am wont to sit when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me.—
—O wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold
Twice by an angel?—
—Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd,
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out?
—Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength, committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seat of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it.

His soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of divine justice. So that at the conclusion of the first act there is no

design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed towards the subsequent event.

In the second act, Manoah, the father of Samson, comes to seek his son, and, being shown him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his misery, and comparisons of his present with his former state, representing to him the ignominy which his religion suffers, by the festival this day celebrated in honour of Dagon, to whom the idolaters ascribed his overthrow:

> ———Thou bear'st
> Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
> Bitterly hast thou paid and still art paying
> That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains,
> This day the Philistines a pop'lar feast
> Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
> Great pomp and sacrifice, and praises loud
> To Dagon as their God, who hath deliver'd
> Thee, Samson, bound and blind, into their hands,
> Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.

Samson, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father considers as the effusion of prophetic confidence.

> *Samson.* ———God, be sure,
> Will not connive or linger thus provok'd,
> But will arise and his great name assert:
> Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
> Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
> Of all these boasted trophies won on me.
>
> *Manoah.* With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
> I as a prophecy receive; for God,
> Nothing more certain, will not long defer
> To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate Samson, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which Samson contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of Delilah, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and instructive, from which she retires, after she has exhausted her persuasions, and is no more seen nor heard of; nor has her visit any effect but that of raising the character of Samson,

In the fourth act enters Harapha, the giant of Gath, whose name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming, than to see the man whose strength and actions are so loudly celebrated:

Harapha.——Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd
Incredible to me; in this displeas'd
That I was never present in the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed fields:
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samson challenges him to the combat; and after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one side, and imbittered by contemptuous insults on the other, Harapha retires; we then hear it determined, by Samson and the chorus, that no consequence good or bad will proceed from their interview:

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.

Sams. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise,
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.

At last, in the fifth act, appears a messenger from the lords assembled at the festival of Dagon, with a summons by which Samson is required to come and entertain them with some proof of his strength. Samson, after a short expostulation, dismisses him with a firm and resolute refusal; but, during the absence of the messenger, having a while defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark presages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency, under the direction of Providence:

Sams. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout of triumph, and afterwards by screams of horrour and agony. As they stand deliberating where they shall be secure, a man who had been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself:

> ——Those two massy pillars,
> With horrible confusion, to and fro
> He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
> The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
> Upon the heads of all who sat beneath——
> ——Samson, with these immixt, inevitably
> Pull'd down the same destruction on himself.

This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

No. 140. Saturday, July 20, 1751.

> ——*Quis tam Lucili fautor inepte est,*
> *Ut non hoc fateatur.* Hor.

> What doating bigot, to his faults so blind,
> As not to grant me this, can Milton find?

It is common, says Bacon, to desire the end without enduring the means. Every member of society feels and acknowledges the necessity of detecting crimes, yet scarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to secure an informer from public hatred. The learned world has always admitted the usefulness of critical disquisitions, yet he that attempts to show, however modestly, the failures of a celebrated writer, shall surely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiousness, and malignity.

With this danger full in my view, I shall proceed to examine the sentiments of Milton's tragedy, which, though

much less liable to censure than the disposition of his plan, are, like those of other writers, sometimes exposed to just exceptions for want of care, or want of discernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they consist more or less with the character and circumstances of the person to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the composition, in which they are found, or with the settled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragic poets to introduce their persons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not possibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly discovered regions often display their skill in European learning. The god of love is mentioned in Tamerlane with all the familiarity of a Roman epigrammatist; and a late writer has put Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a Turkish statesman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philosophers or anatomists.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the ancient eastern nations, and his invention, which required no assistance from the common cant of poetry, have preserved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned Chalybean Steel, of which it is not very likely that his chorus should have heard, and has made Alp the general name of a mountain, in a region where the Alps could scarcely be known:

> No medicinal liquor can assuage,
> Nor breath of cooling air from snowy Alp.

He has taught Samson the tales of Circe, and the Syrens, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with Delilah:

> ——I know thy trains,
> Tho' dearly to my cost, thy gins and toils;
> Thy fair *enchanted cup*, and *warbling charms*,
> No more on me have pow'r.

But the grossest errour of this kind is the solemn introduction of the Phœnix in the last scene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the personage to whom it is ascribed, but as it is so evidently contrary to reason and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any serious poem:

> ——Virtue giv'n for lost,
> Deprest, and overthrown, as seem'd
> Like that self-begotten bird

In the Arabian woods embost
That no second knows, nor third,
And lay ere while a holocaust;
From out our ashy womb now teem'd
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deem'd.
And tho' her body die, her fame survives,
A secular bird, ages of lives.

Another species of impropriety is the unsuitableness of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The seriousness and solemnity of tragedy necessarily reject all pointed or epigrammatical expressions, all remote conceits and opposition of ideas. Samson's complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural:

As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And bury'd but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave!
Bury'd, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs.

All allusions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is usually associated, are doubtless unsuitable to a species of composition which ought to be always awful though not always magnificent. The remark therefore of the chorus on good and bad news seems to want elevation:

Manoah. A little stay will bring some notice hither.
Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news *rides post*, while good news *baits*.

But of all meanness, that has least to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which, depending only upon sounds, lose their existence by the change of a syllable. Of this kind is the following dialogue:

Chor. But had we best retire? I see a *storm*.
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,
The giant Harapha.——

And yet more despicable are the lines in which Manoah's paternal kindness is commended by the chorus:

Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their sons,
Thou for thy son are bent to *lay out* all;—

Samson's complaint of the inconveniencies of imprisonment is not wholly without verbal quaintness:

———I, a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air, imprison'd also, close and damp.

From the sentiments we may properly descend to the consideration of the language, which, in imitation of the ancients, is through the whole dialogue remarkably simple and unadorned, seldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet sometimes metaphors find admission, even where their consistency is not accurately preserved. Thus Samson confounds loquacity with a shipwreck:

How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a foolish *pilot* have *shipwreck'd*
My *vessel* trusted to me from above,
Gloriously *rigg'd*; and for a word, a tear,
Fool, have *divulg'd* the *secret gift* of God
To a deceitful woman!———

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report:

He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
Thy *words*, by *adding fuel to the flame?*

The versification is in the dialogue much more smooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often so harsh and dissonant, as scarce to preserve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity:

Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renown'd,
Irresistible Samson; whom unarm'd
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid?———

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of Milton, critical integrity requires that I should endeavour to display his excellencies, though they will not easily be discovered in short quotations, because they consist in the justness of diffuse reasonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues: this play having none of those descriptions, similes, or splendid sentences, with which other tragedies are so lavishly adorned.

Yet some passages may be selected which seem to deserve particular notice, either as containing sentiments of passion, representations of life, precepts of conduct, or sallies of imagination. It is not easy to give a stronger representation of the weariness of despondency, than in the words of Samson to his father:

——I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;
My race of glory run, and race of shame;
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

The reply of Samson to the flattering Delilah affords a just and striking description of the stratagems and allurements of feminine hypocrisy:

——These are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant, to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
Confess and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail;
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits.

When Samson has refused to make himself a spectacle at the feast of Dagon, he first justifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with having served the Philistines, by a very just distinction; and then destroys the common excuse of cowardice and servility, which always confound temptation with compulsion:

Chor. Yet with thy strength thou servest the Philistines.
Sams. Not in their idol worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.
Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.
Sams. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds.
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
Not dragging? the Philistine lords command.
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind.

The complaint of blindness which Samson pours out at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addressed to the passions and the fancy. The enumeration of his miseries is succeeded

by a very pleasing train of poetical images, and concluded by such expostulations and wishes, as reason too often submits to learn from despair:

> O first created beam, and thou great word
> Let there be light, and light was over all;
> Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
> The sun to me is dark,
> And silent as the moon,
> When she deserts the night,
> Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
> Since light so necessary is to life,
> And almost life itself; if it be true,
> That light is in the soul,
> She all in ev'ry part: why was the sight
> To such a tender ball as the eye confin'd,
> So obvious and so easy to be quench'd,
> And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,
> That she may look at will thro' ev'ry pore?

Such are the faults and such the beauties of Samson Agonistes, which I have shown with no other purpose than to promote the knowledge of true criticism. The everlasting verdure of Milton's laurels has nothing to fear from the blasts of malignity; nor can my attempt produce any other effect, than to strengthen their shoots by lopping their luxuriance.

ciples and actions have taken their colour from some secret infusion, mingled without design in the current of his ideas. The desires that predominate in our hearts are instilled by imperceptible communications at the time when we look upon the various scenes of the world, and the different employments of men, with the neutrality of inexperience; and we come forth from the nursery or the school, invariably destined to the pursuit of great acquisitions, or petty accomplishments.

Such was the impulse by which I have been kept in motion from my earliest years. I was born to an inheritance which gave my childhood a claim to distinction and caresses, and was accustomed to hear applause before they had much influence on my thoughts. The first praise of which I remember myself sensible was that of good-humour, which, whether I deserved it or not when it was bestowed, I have since made it my whole business to propagate and maintain.

When I was sent to school, the gaiety of my look, and the liveliness of my loquacity, soon gained me admission to hearts not yet fortified against affection by artifice or interest. I was entrusted with every stratagem, and associated in every sport; my company gave alacrity to a frolic, and gladness to a holiday. I was indeed so much employed in adjusting or executing schemes of diversion, that I had no leisure for my tasks, but was furnished with exercises, and instructed in my lessons by some kind patron of the higher classes. My master, not suspecting my deficiency, or unwilling to detect what his kindness would not punish, nor his impartiality excuse, allowed me to escape with a slight examination, laughed at the pertness of my ignorance and the sprightliness of my absurdities, and could not forbear to show that he regarded me with such tenderness as genius and learning can seldom excite.

From school I was dismissed to the university, where I soon drew upon me the notice of the youngest students, and was the constant partner of their morning walks and evening compotations. I was not indeed much celebrated for literature, but was looked on with indulgence as a man of parts, who wanted nothing but the dullness of a scholar, and might become eminent whenever he should condescend to labour and attention. My tutor a while reproached me with negligence, and repressed my sallies with supercilious gravity; yet, having natural good-humour lurking in his heart, he could not long hold out against the power of hilarity, but after a few months began to relax the muscles of disciplinarian moroseness, received me with smiles after an elopement, and, that

he might not betray his trust to his fondness, was content to spare my diligence by increasing his own.

Thus I continued to dissipate the gloom of collegiate austerity, to waste my own life in idleness, and lure others from their studies, till the happy hour arrived when I was sent to London. I soon discovered the town to be the proper element of youth and gaiety, and was quickly distinguished as a wit by the ladies, a species of beings only heard of at the university, whom I had no sooner the happiness of approaching than I devoted all my faculties to the ambition of pleasing them.

A wit, Mr. Rambler, in the dialect of ladies, is not always a man who by the action of a vigorous fancy upon comprehensive knowledge brings distant ideas unexpectedly together, who by some peculiar acuteness discovers resemblance in objects dissimilar to common eyes, or, by mixing heterogeneous notions, dazzle the attention with sudden scintillations of conceit. A lady's wit is a man who can make ladies laugh, to which, however easy it may seem, many gifts of nature and attainments of art must commonly concur. He that hopes to be received as a wit in female assemblies should have a form neither so amiable as to strike with admiration, nor so coarse as to raise disgust, with an understanding too feeble to be dreaded, and too forcible to be despised. The other parts of the character are more subject to variation: it was formerly essential to a wit, that half his back should be covered with a snowy fleece; and at a time yet more remote, no man was a wit without his boots. In the days of the Spectator a snuff-box seems to have been indispensable; but in my time an embroidered coat was sufficient, without any precise regulation of the rest of his dress.

But wigs and boots and snuff-boxes are vain, without a perpetual resolution to be merry, and who can always find supplies of mirth? Juvenal indeed, in his comparison of the two opposite philosophers, wonders only whence an unexhausted fountain of tears could be discharged: but had Juvenal, with all his spirit, undertaken my province, he would have found constant gaiety equally difficult to be supported. Consider, Mr. Rambler, and compassionate the condition of a man who has taught every company to expect from him a continual feast of laughter, an unintermitted stream of jocularity. The task of every other slave has an end. The rower in time reaches the port; the lexicographer at last finds the conclusion of his alphabet; only the hapless wit has his labour always to begin, the call for novelty is never satisfied, and one jest only raises expectation of another.

I know that among men of learning and asperity the retainers to the female world are not much regarded: yet I cannot but hope that, if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchased, you would look with some gratulation on our success, and with some pity on our miscarriages. Think on the misery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenness and ransack vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is spent, to raise merriment without images, to harass his imagination in quest of thoughts which he cannot start, and his memory in pursuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; observe the effort with which he strains to conceal despondency by a smile, and the distress in which he sits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as the last refuge from silence and dejection.

It were endless to recount the shifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different species of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffee-houses, and have often lived a week upon an expression, of which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune did not favour my erratic industry, I gleaned jests at home from obsolete farces. To collect wit was indeed safe, for I consorted with none that looked much into books, but to disperse it was the difficulty. A seeming negligence was often useful, and I have very successfully made a reply not to what the lady had said, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were so perverse as to rectify a mistake which had given occasion to a burst of merriment. Sometimes I drew the conversation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treasured up, like sportsmen who boast of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is, however, in some happy moments, gained at less expense; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a series of quibbles, and made myself good company at another by scalding my fingers, or mistaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

These are artful deceits and useful expedients; but expedients are at length exhausted, and deceits detected. Time itself, among other injuries, diminishes the power of pleasing, and I now find, in my 45th year, many pranks and pleasantries very coldly received, which had formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy necessity of supporting that character by study, which I gained by levity, having learned too late that gaiety must be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never

please long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but esteemed for its usefulness.

I am, &c.

PAPILIUS.

No. 142. SATURDAY, July 27, 1751.

Ἐνθα δ' αὖτ' ἐνιαυσι πιλωριος—οὐδε, μετ' αλλους
Πωλειτ' αλλ' απωτερθεν εων ὀιμωγια πηξη.
Και γαρ θαυμ' ἐτετυκτο πιλωριον, οὐδε ἐοικει
Ανερι σιτοφαγω. HOMER.

A giant shepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclined;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in the mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature or in face. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—Having been accustomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation of Eugenio, who has an estate and seat in a distant country. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to please ourselves with a view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal spring, criticised every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and compared every scene of action with the narratives of historians. By this succession of amusements we enjoyed the exercise of a journey without suffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that by a progress so leisurely and gentle we missed the adventures of a post-chaise, and the pleasure of alarming villages with the tumult of our passage, and of disguising our insignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

The first week after our arrival at Eugenio's house was passed in receiving visits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerness of benevolence: some impatient to learn the news of the court and town, that they might be qualified by authentic information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day: others desirous of his interest to accommodate disputes, or of his advice in the settlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

The civilities which he had received were soon to be re-

turned; and I passed some time with great satisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the seats, gardens, and plantations which are scattered over it. My pleasure would indeed have been greater had I been sometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderness alone; but to appear as the friend of Eugenio was an honour not to be enjoyed without some inconveniences: so much was every one solicitous for my regard, that I could seldom escape to solitude, or steal a moment from the emulation of complaisance, and the vigilance of officiousness.

In these rambles of good neighbourhood, we frequently passed by a house of unusual magnificence. While I had my curiosity yet distracted among many novelties, it did not much attract my observation; but in a short time I could not forbear surveying it with particular notice; for the length of the wall which enclosed the gardens, the disposition of the shades that waved over it, and the canals of which I could obtain some glimpses through the trees from our own windows, gave me reason to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet seen in that province. I therefore inquired as we rode by it, why we never, amongst our excursions, spent an hour where there was such an appearance of splendour and affluence? Eugenio told me that the seat which I so much admired was commonly called in the country the *haunted house*, and that no visits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet seen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected, and desolate, I easily conceived that there was something to be explained, and told him that I supposed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by day-light without danger. The danger, says he, is indeed only that of appearing to solicit the acquaintance of a man, with whom it is not possible to converse without infamy, and who has driven from him by his insolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.

Our conversation was then accidentally interrupted, but my inquisitive humour being now in motion, could not rest without a full account of this newly discovered prodigy. I was soon informed that the fine house and spacious gardens were haunted by squire Bluster, of whom it was very easy to learn the character, since nobody had regard for him sufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could discover.

Squire Bluster is descended of an ancient family. The estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed was much augmented by captain Bluster, who served under Drake, in the reign of Elizabeth; and the Blusters, who

were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently represented the shire in parliament, been chosen to present addresses, and giving laws at hunting matches and races. They were eminently hospitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of an election. His lady went to the grave soon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not suffer him to be controled, because she could not bear to hear him cry; and never sent him to school, because she was not able to live without his company. She taught him however very early to inspect the steward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the servants at a junket; so that he was at the age of eighteen a complete master of all the lower arts of domestic policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the ostler, and procured the discharge of nineteen maids for illicit correspondence with cottagers and chair-women.

By the opportunities of parsimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large sum of money was accumulated, and he found himself when he took his affairs into his own hands the richest man in the county. It has been long the custom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-first year by an entertainment, at which the house is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general festivity. On this occasion young Bluster exhibited the first tokens of his future eminence, by shaking his purse at an old gentleman who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater sum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has at one time or other insulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and spiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentless prosecution of every man that presumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no estate adjoining equal to his own, his oppressions are often born without resistance for fear of a long suit, of which he delights to count the expenses without the least solicitude about the event; for he knows that where nothing but an honorary right is contested, the poorer antagonist must always suffer, whatever shall be the last decision of the law.

By the success of some of these disputes he has so elated his insolence, and by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him so irritated his virulence, that his whole life is spent in meditating or executing mischief.

It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand satisfaction for damages which his grounds have suffered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yesterday soliciting Eugenio to enable her to replevin her only cow, then in the pound by squire Bluster's order, who had sent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and persuade her to sell the cow at an under rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage for gathering blackberries in a hedge for his children, and has now an old woman in the county jail for a trespass which she committed by coming into his ground to pick up acorns for her hog.

Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Distress will fly to immediate refuge without much consideration of remote consequences. Bluster has therefore a despotic authority in many families, whom he has assisted, on pressing occasions, with larger sums than they can easily repay. The only visits that he makes are to these houses of misfortune, where he enters with the insolence of absolute command, enjoys the terrours of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy insults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obscenity.

He is of late somewhat less offensive; for one of his debtors, after gentle expostulations, by which he was only irritated to grosser outrage, seized him by the sleeve, led him trembling into the court-yard, and closed the door upon him in a stormy night. He took his usual revenge next morning by a writ; but the debt was discharged by the assistance of Eugenio.

It is his rule to suffer his tenants to owe him rent, because by this indulgence he secures to himself the power of seizure whenever he has an inclination to amuse himself with calamity, and feast his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet as he is sometimes capriciously liberal to those whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppression, the possibility of better fortune quickly lures another to supply his place.

Such is the life of squire Bluster; a man in whose power fortune has liberally placed the means of happiness, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witnesses; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours scorn him as a brute; his dependants dread him as an oppressor; and he has only

the gloomy comfort of reflecting that if he is hated he is likewise feared.

I am, sir, &c.

VAGULUS.

No. 143. TUESDAY, July 30, 1751.

——Moveat cornicula risum
Furtivis nudata coloribus—— HOR.

Lest when the birds their various colours claim,
Stripp'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the public scorn. FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which interest or envy have taught those who live upon literary fame to disturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the most common is the charge of plagiarism. When the excellence of a new composition can no longer be contested, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applause, there is yet this one expedient to be tried, by which the author may be degraded, though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obscure, may be set at such a distance as not to overpower our fainter lustre.

This accusation is dangerous, because, even when it is false, it may be sometimes urged with probability. Bruyere declares that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are pre-occupied, and that description and sentiment have been long exhausted. It is indeed certain, that whoever attempts any common topic, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with those of other writers; nor can the nicest judgment always distinguish accidental similitude from artful imitation. There is likewise a common stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition, which all authors suppose themselves at liberty to use, and which produce the resemblance generally observable among contemporaries. So that in books which best deserve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the disposition of materials already provided; the same ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the possession of other hands; and, by restoring to every man his own, as the Romans must have returned to their cots from the possession of the world, so the most inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages.

Yet the author who imitates his predecessors only by furnishing himself with thoughts and elegancies out of the same general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached as a plagiary, than the architect can be censured as a mean copier of Angelo or Wren, because he digs his marble from the same quarry, squares his stones by the same art, and unites them in columns of the same orders.

Many subjects fall under the consideration of an author, which, being limited by nature, can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly the same; and descriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have, in some degree, that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets describing the spring or the sea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulness of hope, the fugacity of pleasure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity; and for palliatives of these incurable miseries, they would concur in recommending kindness, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When therefore there are found in Virgil and Horace two similar passages:

Hæ tibi erunt artes———
Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.——— VIRG.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee. DRYDEN.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hostem. HOR.

Let Cæsar spread his conquests far,
Less pleas'd to triumph than to spare.

it is surely not necessary to suppose with a late critic, that one is copied from the other, since neither Virgil nor Horace can be supposed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in success.

Cicero and Ovid have on very different occasions remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his soldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why should Ovid be suspected to have owed to Tully an observation which perhaps occurs to every man that sees or hears of military glories?

Tully observes of Achilles, that had not Homer written, his valour had been without praise.

Nisi Ilias illa extitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruisset

Unless the Illiad had been published, his name had been lost in the tomb that covered his body.

Horace tells us with more energy that there were brave men before the wars of Troy, but they were lost in oblivion for want of a poet:

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urguntur, ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave:
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown:
No bard had they to make all time their own. FRANCIS.

Tully enquires, in the same oration, why but for fame, we disturb a short life with so many fatigues?

Quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

Why in so small a circuit of life should we employ ourselves in so many fatigues?

Horace enquires in the same manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

Why do we aim with eager strife,
At things beyond the mark of life? FRANCIS.

when our life is of so short duration, why we form such numerous designs? But Horace, as well as Tully, might discover that records are needful to preserve the memory of actions, and that no records were so durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is short, and that we consume it in unnecessary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction so widely scattered and so easily cropped, that it is scarcely just to tax the use of them as an act by which any particular writer is despoiled of his garland; for they may be said to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their successors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their colours or their fra-

grance. The passage of Orpheus to hell, with the recovery and second loss of Eurydice, have been described after Boetius by Pope, in such a manner as might justly leave him suspected of imitation, were not the images such as they might both have derived from more ancient writers,

Quæ sontus agitant metu
Ultrices sceleruum deæ
Jam mæstæ lacrymis madent,
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The pow'rs of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd with compassion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the sound. P. Lewis.

Thy stone, O Sysiphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds.

Tandem, vicimur, arbitur
Umbrarum, miserans, ait——
Donemus, comitem vire,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

Subdu'd at length, Hell's pitying monarch cry'd,
The song rewarding, let us yield the bride. P. Lewis.

He sung, and hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer:
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.

Heu, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When Orpheus, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life restor'd,
At once beheld, and lost, and was undone.
P. Lewis.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes;
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation, except there is a concurrence of more resemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can scarcely be doubted, that in the first of the following passages Pope remembered Ovid, and that in the second he copied Crashaw:

Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonidis nullas ipse reliquit opes———
Sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod conabar scribere, versus erat. OVID.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cry'd;
Ev'n Homer left no riches when he dy'd———
In verse spontaneous flow'd my native strain,
Forc'd by no sweat or labour of the brain. F. LEWIS.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father disobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came. POPE.

———This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can say more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honest man. CRASHAW.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man. POPE.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impressed by sensible objects, or necessarily arising from the coalition or comparison of common sentiments, may be with great justice suspected whenever they are found a second time. Thus Waller probably owed to Grotius an elegant compliment:

Here lies the learned Savil's heir,
So early wise, and lasting fair,
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old. WALLER.

Unica lux sæcli, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit esse senem. GROTIUS.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you wou'd pronounce him, nor a boy.
F. LEWIS.

And Prior was indebted for a pretty illustration to Alleyne's poetical history of Henry the Seventh.

For nought but light itself, itself can show,
And only king's can write what kings can do.
ALLEYNE.

Your music's power, your music must disclose,
For what light is, 'tis only light that shows. PRIOR.

And with yet more certainty may the same writer be censured for endeavouring the clandestine appropriation of a

thought which he borrowed, surely without thinking himself disgraced, from an epigram of Plato:

> Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κατοπτρον· ἐπεὶ τοίη μεν ὁρᾶσθαι
> Οὐκ ἐθέλω, οἵη δ' ἢν παρος ἐ' δύναμαι.
>
> Venus, take my votive glass,
> Since I am not what I was;
> What from this day I shall be,
> Venus, let me never see.

As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention: and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footsteps.

No. 144. Saturday, August, 3, 1751.

> *Daphnidis arcum*
> *Fregisti et calamos: quæ, tu, perverse Menalca,*
> *Et cum vidisti puero donata, dolebas;*
> *Et si non aliqua nocuisses, mortuus esses.* Virg.
>
> The bow of Daphnis and the shafts you broke;
> When the fair boy receiv'd the gift of right;
> And but for mischief, you had dy'd for spite. Dryden.

It is impossible to mingle in conversation without observing the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The first appearance of excellence unites multitudes against it; unexpected opposition rises up on every side; the celebrated and the obscure join in the confederacy; subtilty furnishes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The strength and unanimity of this alliance is not easily conceived. It might be expected that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed with malice, but by injuries; that none should busy himself in contesting the pretensions of another, but when some right of his own was involved in the question; that at least hostilities, commenced without cause, should quickly cease; that the armies of malignity should soon disperse, when no common interest could be found to hold them together; and that the attack upon a rising cha-

racter should be left to those who had something to hope or fear from the event.

The hazards of those that aspire to eminence, would be much diminished if they had none but acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their enemies would then be few, and, what is yet of greater importance, would be known. But what caution is sufficient to ward off the blows of invisible assailants, or what force can stand against uninterrupted attacks, and a continual succession of enemies? Yet such is the state of the world, that no sooner can any man emerge from the crowd, and fix the eyes of the public upon him, than he stands as a mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and receives in the tumult of hostility, from distant and from nameless hands, wounds not always easy to be cured.

It is probable that the onset against the candidates for renown is originally incited by those who imagine themselves in danger of suffering by their success: but when war is once declared, volunteers flock to the standard, multitudes follow the camp only for want of employment, and flying squadrons are dispersed to every part, so pleased with an opportunity of mischief, that they toil without prospect of praise, and pillage without hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deserve distinction, he will be surprised to hear himself censured where he could not expect to have been named; he will find the utmost acrimony of malice among those whom he never could have offended

vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjust one part of his accusation to another, to preserve decency in his language, or probability in his narratives. He has always a store of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations, ready to be produced as occasion may require, which by constant use he pours out with resistless volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned, he without hesitation devotes him to bankruptcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with rustic deformity; if a new performance of genius happens to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeless idiot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the understanding by which it must be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon those whom he compels to hear them; and though it will sometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, and the credulous mistake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he endeavours to suppress soon recover their former strength, as the trees that bend to the tempest erect themselves again when its force is past.

The Whisperer is more dangerous. He easily gains attention by a soft address, and excites curiosity by an air of importance. As secrets are not to be made cheap by promiscuous publication, he calls a select audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of trust by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell that, though he seems to manage an extensive commerce, and talks in high terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately suffered much by an expensive project, and had a greater share than is acknowledged in the rich ship that perished by the storm. Of the beauty he has little to say, but that they who see her in a morning do not discover all those graces which are admired in the park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty that though the excellence of the work is incontestable, he can claim but a small part of the reputation; that he owed most of the images and sentiments to a secret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the style was produced by the successive correction of the chief critics of the age.

As every one is pleased with imagining that he knows something not yet commonly divulged, secret history easily gains credit; but it is for the most part believed only while it circulates in whispers: and when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The most pernicious enemy is the man of Moderation. Without interest in the question, or any motive but honest curiosity, this impartial and zealous inquirer after truth is

ready to hear either side, and always disposed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He hath heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and, after a diligent comparison of the evidence, concludes it probable that the splendid superstructure of business, being originally built upon a narrow basis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great distance; many merchants have supported themselves by expedients for a time, without any final injury to their creditors; and what is lost by one adventure may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady pleased with admiration, and desirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements, but surely most of her beauties must be genuine, and who can say that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps does not sparkle with the fire of Homer, but has the judgment to discover his own deficiencies, and to supply them by the help of others; and, in his opinion, modesty is a quality so amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may justly be preferred by the public suffrage to petulant wit and ostentatious literature.

He who thus discovers failings with unwillingness, and extenuates the faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repose upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuse.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peevish, and the thoughtless, obstruct that worth which they cannot equal, and, by artifices thus easy, sordid and detestable, is industry defeated, beauty blasted, and genius depressed.

No. 145. Tuesday, August 6, 1751.

Non si priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Ceæque et Alcæi minaces
Stesichorique graves Camenæ. Hor.

What though the muse her Homer throns
High above all the immortal quire;
Nor Pindar's raptures she disowns,
Nor hides the plaintive Cæan lyre:
Alcæus strikes the tyrant soul with dread,
Nor yet is grave Stesichorus unread. Francis.

It is allowed that vocations and employments of least dignity are of the most apparent use; that the meanest artisan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodation of life, than the profound scholar and argumentative theorist; and that the public would suffer less present inconvenience from the banishment of philosophers than from the extinction of any common trade.

Some have been so forcibly struck with this observation, that they have, in the first warmth of their discovery, thought it reasonable to alter the common distribution of dignity, and ventured to condemn mankind of universal ingratitude. For justice exacts that those by whom we are most benefited should be most honoured. And what labour can be more useful than that which procures to families and communities those necessaries which supply the wants of nature, or those conveniences by which ease, security, and elegance, are conferred?

This is one of the innumerable theories which the first attempt to reduce them into practice certainly destroys. If we estimate dignity by immediate usefulness, agriculture is undoubtedly the first and noblest science; yet we see the plough driven, the clod broken, the manure spread, the seeds scattered, and the harvest reaped, by men whom those that feed upon their industry will never be persuaded to admit into the same rank with heroes, or with sages; and who, after all the confessions which truth may extort in favour of their occupation, must be content to fill up the lowest class of the commonwealth, to form the base of the pyramid of subordination, and lie buried in obscurity themselves, while they support all that is splendid, conspicuous, or exalted.

It will be found, upon a closer inspection, that this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reason or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the usefulness and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjusted by comparison of the mental and corporeal abilities, which they appear to employ. That work, however necessary, which is carried on only by muscular strength and manual dexterity, is not of equal esteem, in the consideration of rational beings, with the tasks that exercise the intellectual powers, and require the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious investigations of reason.

The merit of all manual occupations seems to terminate in the inventor; and surely the first ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; since those who civilized barbarians, and taught them how to secure themselves from cold and hunger, were numbered amongst their deities. But these arts once discovered by philosophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterwards practised with very little assistance from the faculties of the soul; nor is any thing necessary to the regular discharge of these inferior duties, beyond that rude observation which the most sluggish intellect may practise, and that industry which the stimulations of necessity naturally enforce.

Yet though the refusal of statues and panegyric to those who employ only their hands and feet in the service of mankind may be easily justified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to justify the superciliousness of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that tenderness and benevolence, which, by the privilege of their common nature, one may claim from another.

That it would be neither wise nor equitable to discourage the husbandman, the labourer, the miner, or the smith, is generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obscure and equally indigent, who, because their usefulness is less obvious to vulgar apprehensions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long exposed to insult without a defender, and to censure without an apologist.

The authors of London were formerly computed by Swift at several thousands, and there is not any reason for suspecting that their number has decreased. Of these only a very few can be said to produce, or endeavour to produce, new ideas, to extend any principle of science, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images or contexture of events; the rest, however laborious, however arrogant, can only be considered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have set up for authors, either with

or without a regular initiation, and, like other artificers, have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the stated time.

It has been formerly imagined, that he who intends the entertainment or instruction of others, must feel in himself some peculiar impulse of genius; that he must watch the happy minute in which his natural fire is excited, in which his mind is elevated with nobler sentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with stronger comprehension; that he must carefully select his thoughts and polish his expressions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raising a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy shall be able to destroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend have been too long *hackneyed in the ways of men* to indulge the chimerical ambition of immortality; they have seldom any claim to the trade of writing, but that they have tried some other without success; they perceive no particular summons to composition. except the sound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the fashion for admitting their thoughts or rejecting them; and about the opinion of posterity they have little solicitude, for their productions are seldom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

That such authors are not to be rewarded with praise is evident, since nothing can be admired when it ceases to exist; but surely, though they cannot aspire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted in that order of men which deserves our kindness, though not our reverence. These papers of the day, the Ephemeræ of learning, have uses more adequate to the purposes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is necessary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with past generations, and to rather know the events which may immediately affect his fortune or quiet, than the revolutions of ancient kingdoms, in which he has neither possessions nor expectations; if it be pleasing to hear of the preferment and dismission of statesmen, the birth of heirs, and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes must be considered as a liberal dispenser of beneficial knowledge.

Even the abridger. compiler, and translator, though their labours cannot be ranked with those of the diurnal historiographer, yet must not be rashly doomed to annihilation. Every size of readers requires a genius of correspondent capacity; some delight in abstracts and epitomes, because they want room in their memory for long details, and content themselves with effects, without inquiry after causes:

some minds are overpowered by splendour of sentiment, as some eyes are offended by a glaring light; such will gladly contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the sun in the water.

As every writer has his use, every writer ought to have his patrons; and since no man, however high he may now stand, can be certain that he shall not be soon thrown down from his elevation by criticism or caprice, the common interest of learning requires that her sons should cease from intestine hostilities, and, instead of sacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to avert persecution from the meanest of their fraternity.

No. 146. Saturday, July 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, treve, qui revolvant
Vestrarum tineas ineptiarum;
Sed cum sponsio, fabulæque lassæ
De Scorpo fuerint et Incitato. Mart.

'Tis possible that one or two
These fooleries of mine may view;
But then the bettings must be o'er,
Nor Crab or Childers talk'd of more. F. Lewis.

None of the projects or designs which exercise the mind of man are equally subject to obstructions and disappointments with the pursuit of fame. Riches cannot easily be denied to them who have something of greater value to offer in exchange; he whose fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuse to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whose days are darkened by languor, or whose nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the science of healing. But praise may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity necessary to his happiness, he has put in the power of the weakest and most timorous malignity, if not to take away his satisfaction, at least to withhold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives, may combine to annihilate it by silence; as the women of Rome threatened to put an end to conquest and dominion by supplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has with long toil produced a work intended to burst upon mankind with unexpected lustre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other contro-

versy or inquiry, he is seldom contented to wait long without the enjoyment of his new praises. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in disguise to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feast upon admiration; composed to encounter censures without emotion; and determined not to suffer his quiet to be injured by a sensibility too exquisite of praise or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at vain objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the places of mingled conversation, sits down to his tea in an obscure corner, and while he appears to examine a file of antiquated journals, catches the conversation of the whole room. He listens, but hears no mention of his book, and therefore supposes that he has disappointed his curiosity by delay; and that as men of learning would naturally begin their conversation with such a wonderful novelty, they had digressed to other subjects before his arrival. The company disperses, and their places are supplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careless. The same expectation hurries him to another place, from which the same disappointment drives him soon away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with restless curiosity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket-match, in another of a pick-pocket; is told by some of an unexpected bankruptcy: by others of a turtle-feast; is sometimes provoked by importunate inquiries after the white bear, and sometimes with praises of the dancing dog; he is afterwards entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height of the Monument; invited to see a foot-race in the adjacent villages; desired to read a ludicrous advertisement; or consulted about the most effectual method of making inquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is busied in affairs, which he thinks below the notice of reasonable creatures, and which are nevertheless sufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He resolves at last to violate his own modesty, and to recall the talkers from their folly by an inquiry after himself. He finds every one provided with an answer; one has seen the work advertised, but never met with any that had read it; another has been so often imposed upon by specious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is established; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after so many writers of greater eminence; the next has inquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and therefore suspects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not understand.

Many are the consolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the understanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age in which solid knowledge, and delicate refinement, have given way to a low merriment, and idle buffoonery, and therefore no writer can hope for distinction, who has any higher purpose than to raise laughter. He finds that his enemies, such as superiority will always raise, have been industrious, while his performance was in the press, to vilify and blast it; and that the bookseller, whom he had resolved to enrich, has rivals that obstruct the circulation of his copies. He at last reposes upon the consideration, that the noblest works of learning and genius have always made their way slowly against ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation, which is never to be lost, must be gradually obtained, as animals of longest life are observed not soon to attain their full stature and strength.

By such arts of voluntary delusion does every man endeavour to conceal his own unimportance from himself. It is long before we are convinced of the small proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn how few can be interested in the fortune of any single man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how small extent the brightest blaze of merit can be spread amidst the mists of business and of folly;

long kept. Of men devoted to literature, very few extend their views beyond some particular science, and the greater part seldom inquire, even in their own profession, for any authors but those whom the present mode of study happens to force upon their notice: they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglected.

The hope of fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardour of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulf of obscurity, cannot but sometimes suspect, that he must himself sink in like manner, and, as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence.

It sometimes happens that fame begins when life is at an end: but far the greater number of candidates for applause have owed their reception in the world to some favourable casualties, and have therefore immediately sunk into neglect, when death stripped them of their casual influence, and neither fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among those who have better claims to regard, the honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives, though still growing fainter, as it is at a greater distance from the first emission; and since it is so difficult to obtain the notice of contemporaries, how little is it to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or friendship can scarcely support it?

No. 147. Tuesday, August 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva. Hor.

——You are of too quick a sight,
Not to discern which way your talent lies. Roscommon.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—As little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous persecution, which,

though it produced no scenes of horrour or of ruin, yet, by incessant importunity of vexation, wears away my happiness, and consumes those years, which nature seems particularly to have assigned to cheerfulness, in silent anxiety and helpless resentment.

I am the eldest son of a gentleman, who having inherited a large estate from his ancestors, and feeling no desire either to increase or lessen it, has from the time of his marriage generally resided at his own seat; where, by dividing his time among the duties of a father, a master, and a magistrate, the study of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himself of the day, without any of those amusements, which all those with whom my residence in this place has made me acquainted, think necessary to lighten the burthen of existence.

When my age made me capable of instruction, my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at Oxford for the extent of his learning and purity of his manners, to undertake my education. The regard with which I saw him treated, disposed me to consider his instructions as important, and I therefore soon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and heard, perhaps too often, very flattering comparisons of my own proficiency with that of others, either less docile by nature, or less happily forwarded by instruction. I was caressed by all that exchanged visits with my father; and as young men are with little difficulty taught to judge favourably of themselves, began to think that close application was no longer necessary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amusement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praise and admiration.

While I was thus banqueting upon my own perfections, and longing in secret to escape from tutorage, my father's brother came from London to pass a summer at his native place. A lucrative employment which he possessed, and a fondness for the conversation and diversions of the gay part of mankind, had so long kept him from rural excursions, that I had never seen him since my infancy. My curiosity was therefore strongly excited by the hope of observing a character more nearly, which I had hitherto reverenced only at a distance.

From all private and intimate conversation, I was long withheld by the perpetual confluence of visitants with whom the first news of my uncle's arrival crowded the house; but was amply recompensed by seeing an exact and punctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in all the stratagems of

endearment, the gradations of respect, and variations of courtesy. I remarked with what justice of distribution he divided his talk to a wide circle; with what address he offered to every man an occasion of indulging some favourite topic, or displaying some particular attainment; the judgment with which he regulated his inquiries after the absent; and the care with which he showed all the companions of his early years how strongly they were infixed in his memory, by the mention of past incidents, and the recital of puerile kindness, dangers, and frolics. I soon discovered that he possessed some science of graciousness and attraction which books had not taught, and of which neither I nor my father had any knowledge; that he had the power of obliging those whom he did not benefit; that he diffused, upon his cursory behaviour and most trifling actions, a gloss of softness and delicacy by which every one was dazzled; and that, by some occult method of captivation, he animated the timorous, softened the supercilious, and opened the reserved. I could not but repine at the inelegance of my own manners, which left me no hopes but not to offend, and at the inefficacy of rustic benevolence, which gained no friends but by real service.

My uncle saw the veneration with which I caught every accent of his voice, and watched every motion of his hand; and the awkward diligence with which I endeavoured to imitate his embrace of fondness, and his bow of respect. He was, like others, easily flattered by an imitator by whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, and repaid my assiduities with compliments and professions. Our fondness was so increased by a mutual endeavour to please each other, that when he returned to London, he declared himself unable to leave a nephew so amiable and so accomplished behind him: and obtained my father's permission to enjoy my company for a few months, by a promise to initiate me in the arts of politeness, and introduce me into public life.

The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore, by travelling very slowly, afforded me time for more loose and familiar conversation; but I soon found, that by a few inquiries which he was not well prepared to satisfy, I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed assembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topics, kept the tongue employed with very little assistance from memory or reflection; but in the chariot, where he was necessitated to support a regular tenour of conversation, without any relief from a new comer, or any power of starting into gay digressions, or destroying argument by a jest, he soon discovered that poverty of ideas which

had been hitherto concealed under the tinsel of politeness. The first day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I should be astonished at my entrance into London, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wisdom against the arts by which rusticity is frequently deluded. The same detail and the same advice he would have repeated on the second day; but as I every moment diverted the discourse to the history of the towns by which we passed, or some other subject of learning or of reason, he soon lost his vivacity, grew peevish and silent, wrapped his cloak about him, composed himself to slumber, and reserved his gaiety for fitter auditors.

At length we entered London, and my uncle was reinstated in his superiority. He awakened at once to loquacity as soon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every street as we crossed it, and owner of every house as we passed by. He presented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances, and splendour of her assemblies; and either in kindness or revenge consulted with her in my presence, how I might be most advantageously dressed for my first appearance, and most expeditiously disencumbered from my villatic bashfulness. My indignation at familiarity thus contemptuous flushed in my face; they mistook anger for shame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of public education, and the happiness of an assurance early acquired.

Assurance is indeed the only qualification to which they seem to have annexed merit. and assurance therefore is perpetually recommended to me as the supply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never sit silent in company when secret history is circulating, but I am reproached for want of assurance. If I fail to return the stated answer to a compliment; if I am disconcerted by unexpected raillery; If I blush when I am discovered gazing on a beauty, or hesitate when I find myself embarrassed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not understand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot gracefully perform; if I suffer a more lively tatler to recount the casualties of a game, or a nimbler fop to pick up a fan, I am censured between pity and contempt as a wretch doomed to grovel in obscurity for want of assurance.

I have found many young persons harassed in the same manner, by those to whom age has given nothing but the assurance which they recommend; and therefore cannot but think it useful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded; and that he whose stupidity has armed him against

the shafts of ridicule. will always act and speak with greater audacity than they whose sensibility represses their ardour, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

No. 148. Saturday, August 17, 1751.

Me pater sævis onerat catenis
Quod viro clemens misero peperci
Me vel extremis Numidarum in oris
Classe releget. Hor.

Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's farthest plains;
My crime, that I, a loyal wife,
In kind compassion sav'd my husband's life. Francis.

Politicians remark, that no oppression is so heavy or lasting as that which is inflicted by the perversion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be seized, and the invader repelled, whenever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated, and wisdom confounded; resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

Equally dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families, under the venerable sanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man; and which therefore may wanton in cruelty without control, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications by which insolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the Romans, that no son could be the murderer of his father; and they had therefore no punishment appropriated to parricide. They seem likewise to have believed with equal confidence that no father could be cruel to his child; and therefore they allowed every man the supreme judicature in his own house, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees, that they determined too hastily in favour

of human nature; they found that instinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the nearest relation might be violated; and that power, to whomsoever intrusted, might be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to supply and to change their institutions; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital punishments from the parent to the magistrate.

There are indeed many houses which it is impossible to enter familiarly, without discovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonstrances but from his own conscience, will seldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying justice by his own will.

If in any situation the heart were inaccessible to malignity, it might be supposed to be sufficiently secured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occasion of its existence, produces an obligation to make that existence happy. To see helpless infancy stretching out her hands, and pouring out her cries in testimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealousy, or any guilt to alienate affection, must surely awaken tenderness in every human mind; and tenderness once excited will be hourly increased by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercussion of communicated pleasure, by the consciousness of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can see the vilest animal courting his regard, and shrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in distress, and flying to him in danger, without more kindness than he can persuade himself to feel for the wild and unsocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourselves those to whom we impart any kind of pleasure, because we imagine their affection and esteem secured to us by the benefits which they receive.

There is indeed another method by which the pride of superiority may be likewise gratified. He that has extinguished all the sensations of humanity, and has no longer any satisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the distributor of happiness, may please himself with exciting terrour as the inflictor of pain: he may delight his solitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands; in imagining the desires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the discontent which prays on the heart in which fear confines it: he may amuse himself with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of punishment; and swell with exultation when

he considers how little of the homage that he received he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us; and since, as Aristotle observes, η οικονομικη μοναρχια, *the government of a family is naturally monarchical*, it is, like other monarchies, too often arbitrarily administered. The regal and parental tyrant differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince, however despotic, has so far shaken off all awe of the public eye, as to venture upon those freaks of injustice which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward not by merit but by fancy, and punishments regulated not by the degree of the offence, but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the misery of others, no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel? The king may be instigated by one man to the destruction of another; he may sometimes think himself endangered by the virtues of a subject; he may dread the successful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiscations; and his guilt may whisper that he can only be secure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppression of those who were born to his protection, of those who can disturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no spoils? Why cowards are cruel may be easily discovered; but for what reason, not more infamous than cowardice, can that man delight in oppression who has nothing to fear?

The unjustifiable severity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that those whom he injures are always in his sight. The injustice of a prince is often exercised upon those of whom he never had any personal or particular knowledge; and the sentence which he pronounces, whether of banishment, imprisonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domestic oppressor dooms himself to gaze upon those faces which he clouds with terrour and with sorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to those who surround him, and can walk with satisfaction in the gloom of his own presence; he that can see submissive misery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy or demands justice, will scarcely be

amended by remonstrance or admonition; he has found means of stopping the avenues of tenderness, and arming his heart against the force of reason.

Even though no consideration should be paid to the great law of social beings, by which every individual is commanded to consult the happiness of others, yet the harsh parent is less to be vindicated than any other criminal, because he less provides for the happiness of himself. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he shall sink back to imbecility, and must depend for ease and cheerfulness upon the officiousness of others. But how has he obviated the inconveniencies of old age, who alienates from him the assistance of his children, and whose bed must be surrounded in the last hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and of pain, by strangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is desirable?

Piety will indeed in good minds overcome provocation, and those who have been harassed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have suffered, so far as to perform the last duties with alacrity and zeal. But surely no resentment can be equally painful with kindness thus undeserved, nor can severer punishment be imprecated upon a man not wholly lost in meanness and stupidity, than, through the tediousness of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindness of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and owe every relief of his miseries, not to gratitude but to mercy.

No. 149. Tuesday, August 20, 1751.

Quod not sit Pylades hoc tempore, non sit Orestes
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis turdusve dabatur Oresti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.—
Te Cadmæa Tyros, me pinguis Gallia vestit:
Vis te purpureum, Marce, sagatus amem?
Ut prætem Pyladen, aliquis mihi prætet Orestem;
Hoc non fit verbis; Marce, ut ameris, ama. Mart. vi. 11.

You wonder now that no man sees
Such friends as those of ancient Greece.
Here lay the point:—Orestes' meat
Was just the same his friend did eat;
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, Pylades, than thine.
In home-spun russet I am drest,
Your cloth is always of the best;
But, honest Marcus, if you please
To choose me for your Pylades,
Remember, words alone are vain;
Love—if you would be lov'd again. F. Lewis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—No depravity of the mind has been more frequently or justly censured than ingratitude. There is indeed sufficient reason for looking on those that can return evil for good, and repay kindness and assistance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted beyond the common degrees of wickedness: nor will he, who has once been clearly detected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deserve to be numbered among social beings; he has endeavoured to destroy confidence, to intercept sympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himself.

There is always danger lest the honest abhorrence of a crime should raise the passions with too much violence against the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous, it ought to be ascertained by stronger evidence. The charge against ingratitude is very general; almost every man can tell what favours he has conferred upon insensibility, and how much happiness he has bestowed without return; but perhaps if these patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boast of having befriended, it would often appear that they consulted only their pleasure or vanity, and repaid themselves their petty donatives by gratifications of insolence and indulgence of contempt.

It has happened that much of my time has been passed in

a dependent state, and consequently I have received many favours in the opinion of those at whose expense I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and as I would not willingly suppose myself less susceptible of virtuous passions than the rest of mankind, I shall lay the history of my life before you, that you may, by your judgment of my conduct, either reform, or confirm, my present sentiments.

My father was the second son of a very ancient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth, whose fortune joined to his own might have supported his posterity in honour; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends to procure him a post, which gave him an opportunity of displaying his elegance and politeness. My mother was equally pleased with splendour, and equally careless of expense; they both justified their profusion to themselves by endeavouring to believe it necessary to the extension of their acquaintance, and improvement of their interest; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid. In the midst of these hopes my father was snatched by an apoplexy; and my mother, who had no pleasure but in dress, equipage, assemblies, and compliments, finding that she could live no longer in her accustomed rank, sunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and discontent.

I was sent with a sister one year younger than myself to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of observing how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourselves on the road with the tenderness and regard with which we should be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young cousins, and for the first month more frequently consoled than upbraided; but in a short time we found our prattle repressed, our dress neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requests referred to the house-keeper:

The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new insults. We were soon brought to the necessity of receding from our imagined equality with our cousins, to whom we sunk into humble companions without choice or influence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their desires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company, and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us such an appearance of superiority to the awkward bashfulnes of our relations, as naturally drew respect and preference from every stranger; and my aunt was forced to assert the dignity of

her own children while they were sculking in corners for fear of notice, and hanging down their heads in silent confusion, by relating the indiscretion of our father, displaying her own kindness, lamenting the misery of birth without estate, and declaring her anxiety of our future provision, and the expedients which she had formed to secure us from those follies, or crimes, in which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occasion. In a short time care was taken to prevent such vexatious mistakes; we were told that fine clothes would only fill our heads with false expectations, and our dress was therefore accommodated to our fortune.

Childhood is not easily dejected or mortified. We felt no lasting pain from insolence or neglect; but, finding that we were favoured and commended by all whose interest did not prompt them to discountenance us, preserved our vivacity and spirit to years of greater sensibility. It then became irksome and disgusting to live without any principle of action but the will of another: and we often met privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to ease our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice, peevishness, and affront.

There are innumerable modes of insult and tokens of contempt, for which it is not easy to find a name, which vanish to nothing in an attempt to describe them, and yet may by continual repetition make day pass after day in sorrow and in terrour. Phrases of cursory compliment and established salutation may, by a different modulation of the voice, or cast of the countenance, convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of respect to expressions of scorn. The dependent who cultivates delicacy in himself, very little consults his own tranquillity. My unhappy vigilance is every moment discovering some petulance of accent, or arrogance of mein, some vehemence of interrogation, or quickness of reply, that recalls my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely as I know not how to resent it.

You are not however to imagine that I think myself discharged from the duties of gratitude, only because my relations do not adjust their looks, or tune their voices, to my expectation. The insolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeness or obliquities of insult. I am often told in express terms of the miseries from which charity has snatched me, while multitudes are suffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the parish; and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours, that I am admitted to the same table with my cousins.

That I sit at the first table I must acknowledge; but I sit there only that I may feel the stings of inferiority. My inqui-

ries are neglected, my opinion is overborn, my assertions are controverted; and, as insolence always propagates itself, the servants overlook me, in imitation of their master: if I call modestly, I am not heard; if loudly, my usurpation of authority is checked by a general frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and sometimes desired to rise upon very slight pretences.

The incivilities to which I am exposed would give me less pain, were they not aggravated by the tears of my sister, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine persecution. As it is said of the supreme magistrate of Venice, that he is a prince in one place, and a slave in another, my sister is a servant to her cousins in their apartments, and a companion only at the table. Her wit and beauty draw so much regard away from them, that they never suffer her to appear with them in any place where they solicit notice and expect admiration; and when they are visited by neighbouring ladies, and pass their hours in domestic amusements, she is sometimes called to fill a vacancy, insulted with contemptuous freedoms, and dismissed to her needle when her place is supplied. The heir has of late, by the instigation of his sisters, begun to harass her with clownish jocularity; he seems inclined to make his first rude essays of waggery upon her; and by the connivance, if not encouragement, of his father, treats her with such licentious brutality as I cannot bear, though I cannot punish it.

No. 150. Saturday, August 24, 1751.

——— *O munera nondum*
Intellecta Deûm! Lucan.

———Thou chiefest good!
Bestow'd by Heaven, but seldom understood. Rowe.

As daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude nor escaped by flight; neither awed by greatness nor eluded by obscurity; philosophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by persuading us that most of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverseness, and that nature has annexed to every vicissitude of external circumstances some advantage sufficient to overbalance all its inconveniences.

This attempt may, perhaps, be justly suspected of resemblance to the practice of physicians, who, when they cannot mitigate pain, destroy sensibility, and endeavour to conceal by opiates the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyrists of calamity have more frequently gained applause to their wit than acquiescence to their arguments; nor has it appeared that the most musical oratory or subtile ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguish of oppression, the tediousness of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet it may be generally remarked, that, where much has been attempted, something has been performed: though the discoveries or acquisitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are at least sufficient to animate his industry. The antidotes with which philosophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it salubrity and sweetness, have at least allayed its bitterness, and contempered its malignity; the balm which she drops upon the wounds of the mind abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

By suffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we secure ourselves from vain and immoderate disquiet; we preserve for better purposes that strength which would be unprofitably wasted in wild efforts of desperation, and maintain that circumspection which may enable us to seize every support, and improve every alleviation. This calmness will be more

easily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

Seneca has attempted, not only to pacify us in misfortune, but almost to allure us to it, by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. "He that never was acquainted with adversity," says he, "has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature." He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Syrens allured the passenger to their coasts, by promising that he shall return πλείονα εἰδώς, with increase of knowledge, with enlarged views, and multiplied ideas.

Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject, is always eager for new inquiries; and in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with variety by more rapid flights and bolder excursions: nor perhaps can there be proposed to those who have been accustomed to the pleasures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts and enlightening their reason.

When Jason, in Valerius Flaccus, would incline the young prince Acastus to accompany him in the first essay of navigation, he disperses his apprehensions of danger by representations of the new tracts of earth and heaven, which the expedition would spread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear, at their return, of the countries which they shall have seen, and the toils which they have surmounted:

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoscere cœli,
Permissum est! pelagus quantos aperimus in usus!
Nunc forsan grave veris opus: sed læta recurret
Cum ratis, et caram cum jam mihi reddet Iolcon;
Quis pudor heu nostros tibi tunc audire labores!
Quam referam vieas tua per suspiria gentes!

Led by our stars, what tracts immense we trace!
From seas remote, what funds of science raise!
A pain to thought! But when th' heroic band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domestic you will then deplore,
And sigh while I describe the various shore. EDW. CAVE.

Acastus was soon prevailed upon by his curiosity to set rocks and hardships at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the same motives have in all ages had the same effect upon those whom the desire of fame or wisdom has distinguished from the lower orders of mankind.

If, therefore, it can be proved that distress is necessary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy situation hides from us so large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the sight of affluence and splendour will be much diminished; for, such is the delight of mental superiority, that none on whom nature or study have conferred it, would purchase the gifts of fortune by its loss.

It is certain, that however the rhetoric of Seneca may have dressed adversity with extrinsic ornaments, he has justly represented it as affording some opportunities of observation, which cannot be found in continual success; he has truly asserted, that to escape misfortune is to want instruction, and that to live at ease is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happiness without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is necessary to a just sense of better fortune; for the good of our present state is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be sufficient to disturb and harass him, if he does not know how much he escapes. The lustre of diamonds is invigorated by the interposition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the shades. The highest pleasure which nature has indulged to sensitive perception is that of rest after fatigue; yet, that state which labour heightens into delight, is of itself only ease, and is incapable of satisfying the mind without the superaddition of diversified amusements.

Prosperity, as is truly asserted by Seneca, very much obstructs the knowledge of ourselves. No man can form a just estimate of his own powers by unactive speculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has surmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been attacked by no temptations, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which therefore the true value cannot be assigned. "He that traverses the lists without an adversary, may receive," says the philosopher, "the reward of victory, but he has no pretensions to the honour." If it be the highest happiness of man to contemplate himself with satisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conscience; he whose courage has made way amidst the turbulence of opposition, and whose vigour has broken through the snares of distress, has many advantages over those that have slept in the shades of indolence, and

whose retrospect of time can entertain them with nothing but day rising upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally necessary is some variety of fortune to a nearer inspection of the manners, principles, and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their subjects, find it necessary to steal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is shown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reasonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm suspicion or excite resentment is carefully suppressed, and nothing appears but uniformity of sentiments and ardour of affection. It may be observed, that the unvaried complaisance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unskilled in human nature; prosperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore must be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is scarcely to be heard, but by those from whom it can serve no interest to conceal it.

No. 151. Tuesday, August 27, 1751.

> Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρω-
> πων φρεσιν αμπλακιαι
> ἀνσριθμητοι κρεμανται
> τουτο δ' ἀμηχανον ευρειν
> Οτι νυν, και ἐν τελευ-
> τα Φερτατον ἀνδρι τυχειν. Pindar.

> But wrapt in errour is the human mind,
> And human bliss is ever insecure:
> Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
> Know we how long the present shall endure? West.

The writers of medicine and physiology have traced with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the constitution, and the several stages by which animal life makes its progress from infancy to decrepitude. Though their observations have not enabled them to discover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet surely, if they be considered only as the amusements of curiosity, they are of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with ca-

talogues of the fixed stars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

It had been a task worthy of the moral philosophers to have considered with equal care the climacterics of the mind; to have pointed out the time at which every passion begins and ceases to predominate, and noted the regular variations of desire, and the succession of one appetite to another.

The periods of mental change are not to be stated with equal certainty; our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend so little on our own management, that something more than negligence is necessary to discompose their structure, or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed in a great measure first to the direction of others, and afterwards of ourselves. It would be difficult to protract the weakness of infancy beyond the usual time: but the mind may be very easily hindered from its share of improvement; and the bulk and strength of manhood must, without the assistance of education and instruction, be informed only with the understanding of a child.

Yet, amidst all the disorder and inequality which variety of discipline, example, conversation, and employment, produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is still discovered, by a vigilant spectator, such a general and remote similitude, as may be expected in the same common nature affected by external circumstances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance, gaze round about us on the same objects, and have our first pains and pleasures, our first hopes and fears, our first aversions and desires, from the same causes: and though, as we proceed farther, life opens wider prospects to our view, and accidental impulses determine us to different paths: yet as every mind, however vigorous or abstracted, is necessitated, in its present state of union, to receive its informations, and execute its purposes, by the intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itself to our intellectual operations; and those whose abilities or knowledge incline them most to deviate from the general round of life, are recalled from eccentricity by the laws of their existence.

If we consider the exercises of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life some particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treasures of knowledge are first opened before us, while novelty blooms alike on either hand, and every thing equally unknown and unexamined seems of equal value, the power of the soul is principally exerted in a vivacious and desultory curiosity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a short time, and flies with equal

ardour to another. She delights to catch up loose and unconnected ideas, but starts away from systems and complications, which would obstruct the rapidity of her transitions, and detain her long in the same pursuit.

When a number of distinct images are collected by these erratic and hasty surveys, the fancy is busied in arranging them; and combines them into pleasing pictures with more resemblance to the realities of life as experience advances, and new observations rectify the former. While the judgment is yet uninformed, and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters: but, in proportion as we have more opportunities of acquainting ourselves with living nature, we are sooner disgusted with copies in which there appears no resemblance. We first discard absurdity and impossibility, then exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at last become cold and insensible to the charms of falsehood, however specious, and, from the imitations of truth, which are never perfect, transfer our affection to truth itself.

Now commences the reign of judgment or reason; we begin to find little pleasure but in comparing arguments, stating propositions, disentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing consequences. The painted vales of imagination are deserted, and our intellectual activity is exercised in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious steps up the narrow tracks of demonstration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or mislead attention, is contemptuously rejected, and every disguise in which errour may be concealed, is carefully observed, till, by degrees, a certain number of incontestable or unsuspected propositions are established, and at last concatenated into arguments, or compacted into systems.

At length weariness succeeds to labour, and the mind lies at ease in the contemplation of her own attainments, without any desire of new conquests or excursions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are settled, and the avenues of apprehension shut against any new intelligence; the days that are to follow must pass in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and assertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward so odious as opposition, so insolent as doubt, or so dangerous as novelty.

In like manner the passions usurp the separate command of the successive periods of life. To the happiness of our first years nothing more seems necessary than freedom from restraint: every man may remember that if he was left to

himself, and indulged in the disposal of his own time, he was once content without the superaddition of any actual pleasure. The new world is itself a banquet; and, till we have exhausted the freshness of life, we have always about us sufficient gratifications: the sunshine quickens us to play, and the shade invites us to sleep.

But we soon become unsatisfied with negative felicity, and are solicited by our senses and appetites to more powerful delights, as the taste of him who has satisfied his hunger must be excited by artificial stimulations. The simplicity of natural amusements is now past, and art and contrivance must improve our pleasures; but, in time, art like nature is exhausted, and the senses can no longer supply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from pleasure to interest, in which pleasure is perhaps included, though diffused to a wider extent, and protracted through new gradations. Nothing now dances before the eyes but wealth and power, nor rings in the ear, but the voice of fame; wealth, to which, however variously denominated, every man at some time or other aspires; power, which all wish to obtain within their circle of action; and fame, which no man, however high or mean, however wise or ignorant, was yet able to despise. Now prudence and foresight exert their influence: no hour is devoted wholly to any present enjoyment, no act or purpose terminates in itself, but every motion is referred to some distant end; the accomplishment of one design begins another, and the ultimate wish is always pushed off to its former distance.

At length fame is observed to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whose vigour and alacrity begin to forsake him, by degrees contracts his designs, remits his former multiplicity of pursuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than his power. Avarice is generally the last passion of those lives of which the first part has been squandered in pleasure, and the second devoted to ambition. He that sinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder business of saving it.

I have in this view of life considered men as actuated only by natural desires, and yielding to their own inclinations, without regard to superior principles, by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of passions restrained. Nature will indeed always operate, human desires will be always ranging; but these motions, though very powerful, are not resistless: na-

ture may be regulated, and desires governed: and, to contend with the predominance of successive passions, to be endangered first by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to pass our time, the time of our preparation for that state which shall put an end to experiment, to disappointment, and to change.

No. 152. Saturday, August 31, 1751.

——Tristia mæstum
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum. Hor.

Disastrous words can best disaster show:
In angry phrase the angry passions glow. Elphinston.

"It was the wisdom," says Seneca, "of ancient times, to consider what is most useful as most illustrious." If this rule be applied to works of genius, scarcely any species of composition deserves more to be cultivated than the epistolary style, since none is of more various or frequent use, through the whole subordination of human life.

It has yet happened that, among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy, to those of any other country, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of public trust, and during the transaction of great affairs; which though they afford precedents to the minister, and memorials to the historian, are of no use as examples of the familiar style, or models of private correspodence.

If it be inquired by foreigners, how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themselves with so little danger in speaking and writing, may we not without either bigotry or arrogance inform them, that it must be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due sense of the dignity of the public? We do not think it reasonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the busy, or the amusements of the gay, should give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity.

A slight perusal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of France have signalized their names, will prove that

other nations need not be discouraged from the like attempts by the consciousness of inability; for surely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory professions, accumulate servile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the despicable remains of Voiture and Scarron.

Yet, as much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleasure which our condition allows, must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the necessary intercourse of civility, and fill up the vacuities of actions by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage, if such of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating insignificance, had supplied us with a few sallies of innocent gaiety, effusions of honest tenderness, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been posterior to performance. The art of composing works of genius has never been taught by the example of those who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewise few criticisms upon the epistolary style. The observation with which Walsh has introduced his pages of inanity, are such as give him little claim to the rank assigned him by Dryden among the critics. "Letters," says he, "are intended as resemblances of conversation, and the chief excellencies of conversation are good-humour and good-breeding." This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquiescence in his own discovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to please must appear pleased, and he who would not provoke rudeness must not practise it. But the question among those who establish rules for an epistolary performance is, how gaiety or civility may be properly expressed; as among the critics in history it is not contested whether truth ought to be preserved, but by what mode of diction it is best adorned.

As letters are written on all subjects, in all states of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to settled rules, or described by any single characteristic; and we may safely disentangle our minds from critical embarrassments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refused admission, which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject. The qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required, are ease and sim-

plicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments. But these directions are no sooner applied to use, than their scantiness and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the person exacts reverence.

That letters should be written with strict conformity to nature is true, because nothing but conformity to nature can make any composition beautiful or just. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occasions not familiar. Whatever elevates the sentiments will consequently raise the expression; whatever fills us with hope or terrour, will produce some perturbation of images and some figurative distortions of praise. Wherever we are studious to please, we are afraid of trusting our first thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by studied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of style.

If the personages of the comic scene be allowed by Horace to raise their language in the transports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epistolary writer may likewise without censure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may with all the solemnity of an historian deduce them from their causes, connect them with their concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistic method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may, without any violation of the edicts of criticism, call every power of rhetoric to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the entertainment of the correspondents are more properly regulated by critical precepts, because the matter and style are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other

aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsic dignity, it must necessarily owe its attractions to artificial embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like Pliny, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without Pliny's eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude, and securing acceptance; but he that has no present to make but a garland, a ribbon, or some petty curiosity, must endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpose for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated, or business transacted, is to preserve in the minds of the absent either love or esteem: to excite love we must impart pleasure, and to raise esteem we must discover abilities. Pleasure will generally be given, as abilities are displayed by scenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected sallies, and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no strength can be valued only for the graces of its decorations. The pebble must be polished with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought surely to be laboured, when they are intended to stand for things.

No. 153. Tuesday, September 3, 1751.

Turba Remi sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit
Damnatos. Juv.

The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes;
Wealth still finds followers, and misfortune foes.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—There are occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, may give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind, upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

I shall therefore forbear the arts by which correspondents generally secure admission; for I have too long remarked the

power of vanity, to doubt that I shall be read by you with a disposition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illustrate and corroborate your own observations.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose patrimony had been wasted by a long succession of squanderers, till he was unable to support any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleness. Being therefore obliged to employ that part of life in study which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in my eighteenth year dispatched to the university, without any rural honours. I had never killed a single woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

At the university I continued to enlarge my acquisitions with little envy of the noisy happiness which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy, and, having obtained my degree, retired to consider at leisure to what profession I should confine that application which had hitherto been dissipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which custom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reasonable, yet to let loose the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniences of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every side: and mechanics have long ago discovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to rest.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer, who had been once the intimate friend of my father, arrived from the Indies with a large fortune; which he had so much harassed himself in obtaining, that sickness and infirmity left him no other desire than to die in his native country. His wealth easily procured him an invitation to pass his life with us; and, being incapable of any amusement but conversation, he necessarily became familiarized to me, whom he found studious and domestic. Pleased with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increase it, I delighted his curiosity with historical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity by inquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

My brother saw how much I advanced in the favour of our guest, who being without heirs was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but never attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was indeed little qualified to solicit the affection of a traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action but his present humour. He often forsook the old gentleman in the midst

of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost an opportunity not only of knowing the history but sharing the wealth of the Mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horse-race.

It was therefore not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family, by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This distinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father.

As no man is willing to believe that he suffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to adulatory compliances, or malignant calumnies. To no purpose did I call upon my patron to attest my innocence, for who will believe what he wishes to be false? In the heat of disappointment they forced their inmate by repeated insults to depart from the house, and I was soon, by the same treatment, obliged to follow him.

He chose his residence in the confines of London, where rest, tranquillity, and medicine, restored him to part of the health which he had lost. I pleased myself with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain the immediate possession of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he, who had thus distinguished me, might hope to end his life without a total frustration of those blessings, which, whatever be their real value, he had sought with so much diligence, and purchased with so many vicissitudes of danger and fatigue.

He, indeed, left me no reason to repine at his recovery; for he was willing to accustom me early to the use of money; and set apart for my expenses such a revenue as I had scarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myself that fortune has seen her golden cup once tasted without inebriation. Neither my modesty nor prudence were overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without insolence, and my expense without profusion. Employing the influence which money always confers to the improvement of my understanding, I mingled in parties of gaiety, and in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where instruction was to be found, and imagined that, by ranging through all the diversities of life, I had acquainted myself fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I soon discovered how much was wanted to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to Seneca's remark, I had hitherto seen the world but on one side. My patron's confidence in his in-

crease of strength temped him to carelessness and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him, without any of the heir's affected grief or secret exultation; then preparing to take a legal possession of his fortune, I opened his closet, where I found a will, made at his first arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy sufficient to support me in the prosecution of my studies.

I had not yet found such charms in prosperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injustice, and made haste to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindness, but by the delays of indolence, and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and soon made my disappointment public by the tumult of their claims, and the splendour of their sorrow.

It was now my part to consider how I should repair the disappointment. I could not but triumph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge entitled to eminence, and, in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches, I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me, without any change of posture, or collection of countenance, that their master was at home, and suffered me to open the inner door without assistance. I found my friend standing, and, as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally entreated to sit down; but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescensions.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stock-jobber, and left me exposed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice, and solicited my interest.

I was then set down at the door of another, who, upon my entrance, advised me, with great solemnity, to think of some settled provision for life. I left him and hurried away to an

old friend, who professed himself unsusceptible of any impressions from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

Of sixty-seven doors, at which I knocked in the first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer room till business was despatched; at four, was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one, heard the footman rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed, in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies; but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit; and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gaiety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard with a steady countenance; and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come I scatter infirmity and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I entreat to sing are troubled with colds: if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the head-ach; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortune, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and whenever we happen to meet, presume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my œconomy, and direct my pursuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally despicable, are every moment recommending to me an attention to my interest, and think themselves entitled, by their superior prudence, to reproach me if I speak or move without regard to profit.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatness and the eye of beauty, gives spirit to the dull, and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without understanding, the sport of caprice, the scoff of insolence, the slave of meanness, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

No. 154. Saturday, September 7, 1751.

——Tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis
Aggredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes. Virg.

For thee my tuneful accents will I raise,
And treat of arts disclos'd in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the sacred spring. Dryden.

The direction of Aristotle to those that study politics, is, first to examine and understand what has been written by the ancients upon government; then to cast their eyes round upon the world, and consider by what causes the prosperity of communities is visibly influenced, and why some are worse and others better administered.

The same method must be pursued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The first task is to search books, the next to contemplate nature. He must first possess himself of the intellectual treasures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to increase them by his own collections.

The mental disease of the present generation is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity. The wits of these happy days have discovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious ancestors durst never attempt; they cut the knots of sophistry which it was formerly the business of years to unite, solve difficulties by sudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long processes of argument by immediate intuition.

Men who have flattered themselves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waste their lives over books, as a race of inferior beings, condemned by nature to perpetual pupilage, and fruitlessly endeavouring to remedy their barrenness by incessant cultivation, or succour their feebleness by subsidiary strength. They presume that none would be more industrious than they, if they were not more sensible of deficiencies; and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modesty only to his weakness.

It is however certain, that no estimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than those by which a man computes the force of his own genius. It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that, by the natural attraction of similitude, we associate with men like ourselves, young, sprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accomplishments by comparison.

with theirs: when we have once obtained an acknowledged superiority over our acquaintances, imagination and desire easily extend it over the rest of mankind; and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old, and die in admiration of ourselves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily listens to the voice of idleness, and sooths the slumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatness. A man, elated by confidence in his natural vigour of fancy and sagacity of conjecture, soon concludes that he already possesses whatever toil and inquiry can confer. He then listens with eagerness to the wild objections which folly has raised against the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigested knowledge; describes the mischievous effects of heterogeneous sciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroic merit of those who deviate from prescription, or shake off authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and universities.

All these pretensions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which superficial acuteness gains in triumphs over ignorance unsupported by vivacity, are observed by Locke to be lost, whenever real learning and rational diligence appear against her; the sallies of gaiety are soon repressed by calm confidence; and the artifices of subtilty are readily detected by those, who, having carefully studied the question, are not easily confounded or surprised.

But, though the contemner of books had neither been deceived by others nor himself, and was really born with a genius surpassing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet surely such gifts of providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground naturally fertile, is more shamefully culpable, than he whose field would scarcely recompense his husbandry.

Cicero remarks, that not to know what has been transacted in former times, is to continue always a child. If no use is made of the labours of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The discoveries of every man must terminate in his own advantage, and the studies of every age be employed on questions which the past generation had discussed and determined. We may with as little reproach borrow science as manufactures from our ancestors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture which our understandings will not supply.

To the strongest and quickest mind it is far easier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetic and geometry may be comprehended by a close attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himself that the study of a long life would have enabled him to discover them, when he sees them yet unknown to so many nations, whom he cannot suppose less liberally endowed with natural reason than the Grecians or Egyptians?

Every science was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary students, and the gradual discoveries of one age improving on another. Sometimes unexpected flashes of instruction were struck out by the fortuitous collision of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philosopher to whom they happened had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and transmitting, unclouded, to posterity, that light which had been kindled by causes out of his power. The happiness of these casual illuminations no man can promise to himself, because no endeavours can procure them; and therefore, whatever be our abilities or application, we must submit to learn from others what would have lain hid for ever from human penetration, had not some remote inquiry brought it to view; as treasures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exercise of their common occupations.

The man whose genius qualifies him for great undertakings, must at least be content to learn from books the present state of human knowledge; that he may not ascribe to himself the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event has been long registered; and waste, in attemps which have already succeeded or miscarried, that time which might have been spent with usefulness and honour upon new undertakings.

But, though the study of books is necessary, it is not sufficient to constitute literary eminence. He that wishes to be counted among the benefactors of posterity, must add by his own toil to the acquisitions of his ancestors, and secure his memory from neglect by some valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the wastes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undisciplined and barbarous; or by surveying more exactly our ancient dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortresses and retreats where she skulks undetected and undisturbed. Every science has its difficulties, which yet call for solution before we attempt new systems of knowledge; as every country has its forests and marshes, which it would be wise to cultivate and drain, before distant colo-

nies are projected as a necessary discharge of the exuberance of inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind must have invention in the design or the execution: either the effect must itself be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown must be discovered, or those which are already known enforced by stronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illustrations.

Fame cannot spread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and manured by art. That which hopes to resist the blast of malignity, and stand firm against the attacks of time, must contain in itself some original principle of growth. The reputation which arises from the detail or transportation of borrowed sentiments, may spread for a while like ivy on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and suffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

No. 155. Tuesday, September 10, 1751.

——Steriles transmisimus annos,
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ. Stat.

——Our barren years are past;
Be this of life the first, of sloth the last. Elphinston.

No weakness of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadversion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the easiness with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It seems generally believed, that, as the eye cannot see itself, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own state, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion which, like innumerable other postulates, an inquirer finds himself inclined to admit upon very little evidence, because it affords a ready solution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greatest abilities frequently fail to promote the happiness of those who possess them; why those who can distinguish with the utmost nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, suffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant resign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make

hourly approaches towards ruin, without one sigh of solicitude or struggle for escape.

When a position teems thus with commodious consequences, who can without regret confess it to be false? Yet it is certain that declaimers have indulged a disposition to describe the dominion of the passions as extended beyond the limits that nature assigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind: it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others, and disposes us to resent censures lest we should confess them to be just. We are secretly conscious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the public eye, and please ourselves with innumerable impostures, by which, in reality, nobody is deceived.

In proof of the dimness of our internal sight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the success of the most absurd and incredible flattery, and the resentment always raised by advice, however soft, benevolent, and reasonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it consoles our wants than displays our possessions. He that shall solicit the favour of his patron by praising him for qualities which he can find in himself, will be defeated by the more daring panegyrist who enriches him with adscititious excellence. Just praise is only a debt, but flattery is a present. The acknowledgment of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of those which we only feign, or desire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confession of sovereignty over regions never conquered, as a favourable decision of disputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice is offensive, not because it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which had escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as to ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes that superiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without inquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they

would readily listen to information that recalls them from their errours, and catch the first alarm by which destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right; they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it: therefore few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expense, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

The mischief of flattery is, not that it persuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it suppresses the influence of honest ambition, by raising an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice arises commonly, not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the discovery which it affords of the public suffrages. He that could withstand conscience is frighted at infamy, and shame prevails when reason was defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perspicacity cannot discover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence, or dissipated by levity, sheltered by hypocrisy, or blasted by disgrace, who does not intend some time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleasure and interest, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itself by habit; and the change of manners, though sincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when some craving passion shall be fully gratified, or some powerful allurement cease its importunity.

Thus procrastination is accumulated on procrastination, and one impediment succeeds another, till age shatters our resolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of salutary purposes, after they have long delighted the imagination, and appeased that disquiet which every mind feels from known misconduct, when the attention is not diverted by business or by pleasure.

Nothing surely can be more unworthy of a reasonable nature, than to continue in a state so opposite to real happiness,

as that all the peace of solitude, and felicity of meditation, must arise from resolutions of forsaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men, who pass months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit, or betrayed by passion, into practices which they closed and opened their eyes with purposes to avoid; purposes which, though settled on conviction, the first impulse of momentary desire totally overthrows.

The influence of custom is indeed such, that to conquer it will require the utmost efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any men more worthy of veneration and renown, than those who have burst the shackles of habitual vice. This victory, however, has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroic as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of solicitation more frequent. He that, from experience of the folly of ambition, resigns his offices, may set himself free at once from temptation to squander his life in courts, because he cannot regain his former station. He who is enslaved by an amorous passion, may quit his tyrant in disgust, and absence will, without the help of reason, overcome by degrees the desire of returning. But those appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory measures or gradual advances, are more tenaciously adhesive; the wish is so near the enjoyment, that compliance often precedes consideration; and before the powers of reason can be summoned, the time for employing them is past.

Indolence is therefore one of the vices from which those whom it once infects are seldom reformed. Every other species of luxury operates upon some appetite that is quickly satiated, and requires some concurrence of art or accident which every place will not supply; but the desire of ease acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more increased. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapse to indolence is soft and imperceptible, because it is only a mere cessation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, because it implies a change from rest to motion, from privation to reality.

Facilis descensus averni:
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua ditis;
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est. VIRG.

The gates of Hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
But to return, and view the cheerful skies,
In this the task and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulges it is conscious: we all know our own state, if we could be induced to consider it; and it might perhaps be useful to the conquest of all these ensnarers of the mind, if, at certain stated days, life was reviewed. Many things necessary are omitted, because we vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will forever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unsettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can scarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorse. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himself a desire to distinguish every stage of his existence by some improvement, and delight himself with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new series of virtue and felicity.

No. 156. Saturday, September 14, 1751.

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dicit. Juv.

For wisdom ever echoes nature's voice.

Every government, say the politicians, is perpetually degenerating towards corruption, from which it must be rescued at certain periods by the resuscitation of its first principles, and the re-establishment of its original constitution. Every animal body, according to the methodic physicians, is, by the predominance of some exuberant quality, continually declining towards disease and death, which must be obviated by a seasonable reduction of the peccant humour to the just equipoise which health requires.

In the same manner the studies of mankind, all at least which, not being subject to rigorous demonstration, admit the influence of fancy and caprice, are perpetually tending to errour and confusion. Of the great principles of truth which the first speculatists discovered, the simplicity is embarrassed by ambitious additions, or the evidence obscured by inaccurate argumentation; and as they descend from one succession of writers to another, like light transmitted from room to room, they lose their strength and splendour, and fade at last in total evanescence.

The systems of learning therefore must be sometimes reviewed, complication analysed into principles, and knowledge disentangled from opinion. It is not always possible,

without a close inspection, to separate the genuine shoots of consequential reasoning, which grow out of some radical postulate, from the branches which art has engrafted on it. The accidental prescriptions of authority, when time has procured them veneration, are often confounded with the laws of nature, and those rules are supposed coëval with reason, of which the first rise cannot be discovered.

Criticism has sometimes permitted fancy to dictate the laws by which fancy ought to be restrained, and fallacy to perplex the principles by which fallacy is to be detected; her superintendence of others has betrayed her to negligence of herself; and, like the ancient Scythians, by extending her conquests over distant regions, she has left her throne vacant to her slaves.

Among the laws of which the desire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has prompted the prescription, all which writers have received, had not the same original right to our regard. Some are to be considered as fundamental and indispensable, others only as useful and convenient; some as dictated by reason and necessity, others as enacted by despotic antiquity; some as invincibly supported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of the intellect; others as formed by accident, or instituted by example, and therefore always liable to dispute and alteration.

That many rules have been advanced without consulting nature or reason, we cannot but suspect, when we find it peremptorily decreed by the ancient masters, that *only three speaking personages should appear at once upon the stage;* a law, which, as the variety and intricacy of modern plays has made it impossible to be observed, we now violate without scruple, and, as experience proves, without inconvenience.

The original of this precept was merely accidental. Tragedy was a monody, or solitary song in honour of Bacchus, improved afterwards into a dialogue by the addition of another speaker: but the ancients remembering that the tragedy was at first pronounced only by one, durst not for some time venture beyond two: at last, when custom and impunity had made them daring, they extended their liberty to the admission of three, but restrained themselves by a critical edict from further exorbitance.

By what accident the number of acts was limited to five, I know not that any author has informed us; but certainly it is not determined by any necessity arising either from the nature of action or propriety of exhibition. An act is only the

representation of such a part of the business of the play as proceeds in an unbroken tenour, or without any intermediate pause. Nothing is more evident than that of every real, and by consequence of every dramatic action, the intervals may be more or fewer than five; and indeed the rule is upon the English stage every day broken in effect, without any other mischief than that which arises from an absurd endeavour to observe it in appearance. Whenever the scene is shifted the act ceases, since some time is necessarily supposed to elapse while the personages of the drama change their place.

With no greater right to our obedience have the critics confined the dramatic action to a certain number of hours. Probability requires that the time of action should approach somewhat nearly to that state of exhibition, and those plays will always be thought most happily conducted which crowd the greatest variety into the least space. But since it will frequently happen that some delusion must be admitted, I know not where the limits of imagination can be fixed. It is rarely observed that minds, not prepossessed by mechanical criticism, feel any offence from the extension of the intervals between the acts; nor can I conceive it absurd or impossible, that he who can multiply three hours into twelve or twenty-four, might imagine with equal ease a greater number.

I know not whether he that professeth to regard no other laws than those of nature, will not be inclined to receive tragi-comedy to his protection, whom, however generally condemned, her own laurels have hitherto shaded from the fulminations of criticism. For what is there in the mingled drama which impartial reason can condemn? The connection of important with trivial incidents, since it is not only common but perpetual in the world, may surely be allowed upon the stage, which pretends only to be the mirrour of life. The impropriety of suppressing passions before we have raised them to the intended agitation, and of diverting the expectation from an event which we keep suspended only to raise it, may be speciously urged. But will not experience show this objection to be rather subtile than just? Is it not certain that the tragic and comic affections have been moved alternately with equal force; and that no plays have oftener filled the eye with tears, and the breast with palpitation, than those which are variegated with interludes of mirth?

I do not however think it safe to judge of works of genius merely by the event. The resistless vicissitudes of the heart, this alternate prevalence of merriment and solemnity, may sometimes be more properly ascribed to the vigour of the

writer than the justness of the design: and, instead of vindicating tragi-comedy by the success of Shakspeare, we ought, perhaps, to pay new honours to that transcendent and unbounded genius that could preside over the passions in sport; who, to actuate the affections, needed not the slow gradation of common means, but could fill the heart with instantaneous jollity or sorrow, and vary our disposition as he changed his scenes. Perhaps the effect even of Shakspeare's poetry might have been yet greater, had he not counteracted himself; and we might have been more interested in the distresses of his heroes, had we not been so frequently diverted by the jokes of his buffoons.

There are other rules more fixed and obligatory. It is necessary that of every play the chief action should be single; for, since a play represents some transaction through its regular maturation to its final event, two actions equally important must evidently constitute two plays.

As the design of tragedy is to instruct by moving the passions, it must always have a hero, a personage apparently and incontestably superiour to the rest, upon whom the attention may be fixed, and the anxiety suspended. For though, of two persons opposing each other with equal abilities and equal virtue, the auditor will inevitably, in time, choose his favourite; yet, as that choice must be without any cogency, of conviction, the hopes or fears which it raises will be faint and languid. Of two heroes acting in confederacy against a common enemy, the virtues or dangers will give little emotion, because each claims our concern with the same right, and the heart lies at rest between equal motives.

It ought to be the first endeavour of a writer to distinguish nature from custom; or that which is established because it is right, from that which is right only because it is established; that he may neither violate essential principles by a desire of novelty, nor debar himself from the attainment of beauties within his view, by a needless fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact.

No. 157. Tuesday, September 17, 1751.

——'Οι ἀιδως
Γιγνεται, η ἀνοδρας μεγα σωζεται ηδ' οι' ωφειν. Hom.

Shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind. Elphinston.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Though one of your correspondents has presumed to mention with some contempt that presence of attention, and easiness of address, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and esteem, yet I cannot be persuaded to think them unworthy of regard or cultivation; but am inclined to believe that, as we seldom value rightly what we have never known the misery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happiness; and that a natural exuberance of assurance has hindered him from discovering its excellence and use.

This felicity, whether bestowed by constitution, or obtained by early habitudes, I can scarcely contemplate without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge, and the happiness of virtue. By frequency of admonition, and confidence of assertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that the splendour of literature would always attract reverence, if not darkened by corruption. I therefore pursued my studies with incessant industry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to consider either as vicious or tending to vice, because I regarded guilt and reproach as inseparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greatest calamity.

At the university, I found no reason for changing my opinion: for though many among my fellow students took the opportunity of a more remiss discipline to gratify their passions; yet virtue preserved her natural superiority, and those who ventured to neglect were not suffered to insult her. The ambition of petty accomplishments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was observed to seize commonly on those who either neglected the sciences or could not attain them; and I was therefore confirmed in the doctrines of my old master, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining and imparting knowledge.

This purity of manners, and intensenesss of application, soon extended my renown, and I was applauded, by those whose opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence.

My performances in time reached my native province, and my relations congratulated themselves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

I returned home covered with academical laurels, and fraught with criticism and philosophy. The wit and the scholar excited curiosity, and my acquaintance was solicited by innumerable invitations. To please will always be the wish of benevolence, to be admired must be the constant aim of ambition; and I therefore considered myself as about to receive the reward of my honest labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

The third day after my arrival I dined at the house of a gentleman who had summoned a multitude of his friends to the annual celebration of his wedding-day. I set forward with great exultation, and thought myself happy that I had an opportunity of displaying my knowledge to so numerous an assembly. I felt no sense of my own insufficiency, till, going up stairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obstreperous merriment. I was, however, disgusted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company rose at my entrance; but when I saw so many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blasted with a sudden imbecility, I was quelled by some nameless power which I found impossible to be resisted. My sight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harassed by the multitude of eager salutations, and returned the common civilities with hesitation and impropriety; the sense of my own blunders increased my confusion, and, before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to sit down, I was ready to sink under the oppression of surprise; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

The assembly then resumed their places, and I sat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the questions of curiosity, or the appeals of complaisance, I could seldom answer but with negative monosyllables, or professions of ignorance; for the subjects on which they conversed were such as are seldom discussed in books, and were therefore out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reason of my conciseness, relieved me by some questions about the present state of natural knowledge, and engaged me by an appearance of doubt and opposition, in the explication and defence of the Newtonian philosophy.

The consciousness of my own abilities roused me from depression, and long familiarity with my subject enabled me to discourse with ease and volubility; but, however I might please myself, I found very little added by my demonstrations

to the satisfaction of the company; and my antagonist, who knew the laws of conversation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topic, after he had commended my acuteness and comprehension, dismissed the controversy, and resigned me to my former insignificance and perplexity.

After dinner, I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-table. I congratulated myself upon an opportunity to escape from the company, whose gaiety began to be tumultuous, and among whom several hints had been dropped of the usefulness of universities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardness of scholars. To the ladies, therefore, I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, insult, and rusticity; but found my heart sink as I approached their apartment, and was again disconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the necessity of encountering so many eyes at once.

When I sat down I considered that something pretty was always said to ladies, and resolved to recover my credit by some elegant observation or graceful compliment. I applied myself to the recollection of all that I had read or heard in praise of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate some classical compliment to the present occasion. I sunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, considered whatever the poets have sung in their praise, and after having borrowed and invented, chosen and rejected, a thousand sentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been understood, I was awakened from my dream of learned gallantry by the servant who distributed the tea.

There are not many situations more incessantly uneasy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to speak, without courage to take it when it is offered, and who, though he resolves to give a specimen of his abilities, always finds some reason or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was ashamed of silence, yet could find nothing to say of elegance or importance equal to my wishes. The ladies, afraid of my learing, thought themselves not qualified to propose any subject of prattle to a man so famous for dispute, and there was nothing on either side but impatience and vexation.

In this conflict of shame, as I was re-assembling my scattered sentiments, and, resolving to force my imagination to some sprightly sally, had just found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations I suffered the saucer to drop from my hand. The cup was broken, the lap-dog was scalded, a brocade petticoat was stained, and the

whole assembly was thrown into disorder. I now considered all hopes of reputation at an end, and while they were consoling and assisting one another, stole away in silence.

The misadventures of this unhappy day are not yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meanest of them that triumphed over me in this state of stupidity and contempt, and feel the same terrours encroaching upon my heart at the sight of those who have once impressed them. Shame, above any other passion, propagates itself. Before those who have seen me confused, I can never appear without new confusion; and the remembrance of the weakness which I formerly discovered, hinders me from acting or speaking with my natural force.

But is this misery, Mr. Rambler, never to cease? have I spent my life in study only to become the sport of the ignorant, and debarred myself from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which must sleep in silence, and form opinions which I must not divulge? Inform me, dear sir, by what means I may rescue my faculties from these shackles of cowardice, how I may rise to a level with my fellow-beings, recall myself from this languor of involuntary subjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reasoning the liberty of speech.

I am, sir, &c.

VERECUNDULUS.

No. 158. SATURDAY, September 21, 1751.

Grammatica certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est. HOR.

——Critics yet contend,
And of their vain disputings find no end. FRANCIS.

CRITICISM, though dignified from the earliest ages by the labours of men eminent for knowledge and sagacity, and, since the revival of polite literature, the favourite study of European scholars, has not yet attained the certainty and stability of science. The rules hitherto received are seldom drawn from any settled principle or self-evident postulate, or adapted to the natural and invariable constitution of things; but will be found, upon examination, the arbitrary edicts of legislators, authorized only by themselves, who out of various means by which the same end may be attained, selected such as happened to occur to their own reflection, and then, by a law which idleness and timidity were too willing to

obey, prohibited new experiments of wit, restrained fancy from the indulgence of her innate inclination to hazard and adventure, and condemned all future flights of genius to pursue the path of the Meonian eagle.

This authority may be more justly opposed, as it is apparently derived from them whom they endeavour to control; for we owe few of the rules of writing to the acuteness of critics, who have generally no other merit than that, having read the works of great authors with attention, they have observed the arrangement of their matter, or the graces of their expression, and then expected honour and reverence for precepts which they never could have invented: so that practice has introduced rules, rather than rules have directed practice.

For this reason the laws of every species of writing have been settled by the ideas of him who first raised it to reputation, without inquiry whether his performances were not yet susceptible of improvement. The excellencies and faults of celebrated writers have been equally recommended to posterity; and, so far has blind reverence prevailed, that even the number of their books has been thought worthy of imitation.

The imagination of the first authors of lyric poetry was vehement and rapid, and their knowledge various and extensive. Living in an age when science had been little cultivated, and when the minds of their auditors, not being accustomed to accurate inspection, were easily dazzled by glaring ideas, they applied themselves to instruct rather by short sentences and striking thoughts, than by regular argumentation; and, finding attention more successfully excited by sudden sallies and unexpected exclamations, than by the more artful and placid beauties of methodical deduction, they loosed their genius to its own course, passed from one sentiment to another without expressing the intermediate ideas, and roved at large over the ideal world with such lightness and agility, that their footsteps are scarcely to be traced.

From this accidental peculiarity of the ancient writers the critics deduce the rules of lyric poetry, which they have set free from all the laws by which other compositions are confined, and allow to neglect the niceties of transition, to start into remote digressions, and to wander without restraint from one scene of imagery to another.

A writer of later times has, by the vivacity of his essays, reconciled mankind to the same licentiousness in short dissertations; and he therefore who wants skill to form a plan, or diligence to pursue it, needs only entitle his performance

an essay, to acquire the right of heaping together the collections of half his life, without order, coherence, or propriety.

In writing, as in life, faults are endured without disgust when they are associated with transcendent merit, and may be sometimes recommended to weak judgments by the lustre which they obtain from their union with excellence; but it is the business of those who presume to superintend the taste or morals of mankind, to separate delusive combinations, and distinguish that which may be praised from that which can only be excused. As vices never promote happiness, though, when overpowered by more active and more numerous virtues, they cannot totally destroy it; so confusion and irregularity produce no beauty, though they cannot always obstruct the brightness of genius and learning. To proceed from one truth to another, and connect distant propositions by regular consequences, is the great prerogative of man. Independent and unconnected sentiments flashing upon the mind in quick succession, may, for a time, delight by their novelty; but they differ from systematical reasoning, as single notes from harmony, as glances of lightning from the radiance of the sun.

When rules are thus drawn, rather from precedents than reason, there is danger not only from the faults of an author, but from the errours of those who criticise his works; since they may often mislead their pupils by false representations, as the Ciceronians of the sixteenth century were betrayed into barbarisms by corrupt copies of their darling writer.

It is established at present, that the proëmial lines of a poem, in which the general subject is proposed, must be void of glitter and embellishment. "The first lines of Paradise Lost," says Addison, "are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem; in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace."

This observation seems to have been made by an implicit adoption of the common opinion, without consideration either of the precept or example. Had Horace been consulted, he would have been found to direct only what should be comprised in the proposition, not how it should be expressed; and to have commended Homer in opposition to a meaner poet, not for the gradual elevation of his diction, but the judicious expansion of his plan; for displaying unpromised events, not for producing unexpected elegancies:

——*Speciosa dehinc miracula promit,*
Antiphaten Scyllamque, et cum Cyclope Charybdim.

But from a cloud of smoke he breaks to light,
And pours his specious miracles to sight;
Antiphates his hideous feast devours,
Charybdis barks, and Polyphemus roars. FRANCIS.

If the exordial verses of Homer be compared with the rest of the poem, they will not appear remarkable for plainness or simplicity, but rather eminently adorned and illuminated:

Ἀνδρα μοι εννεπε Μουσα πολυτροπον, ος μαλα πολλα
Πλαγχθη, επει Τροιης ιερον πτολιεθρον επερσε·
Πολλων δ' ανθρωπων ιδεν αστεα, και νοον εγνω.
Πολλα δ' ογ' εν ποντω παθεν αλγεα ον κατα θυμον,
Αρνυμενος ην τε ψυχην και νοον ενταιρων·
Αλλ' ουδ' ως εταρους ερρυσατο ιεμενος περ·
Αυτων γαρ σφετερησιν ατασθαλιησιν ολοντο,
Νηπιοι, οι κατα βους υπεριονος ηελιοιο
Ησθιον· αυταρ ο τοισιν αφειλετο νος ιμον ημαρ.
Των αμοθεν γε, θεα, θυγατερ Διος, ειπε και ημιν.

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, O muse resound;
Who, when his arms had wrought the destin'd fall
Of sacred Troy, and raz'd her heav'n-built wall,
Wand'ring from clime to clime observant stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd:
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore:
Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day:
The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah! men unblest) to touch that natal shore.
O snatch some portion of these acts from fate,
Celestial muse! and to our world relate. POPE.

The first verses of the Iliad are in like manner particularly splendid, and the proposition of the Eneid closes with dignity and magnificence not often to be found even in the poetry of Virgil.

The intent of the introduction is to raise expectation, and suspend it: something therefore must be discovered, and something concealed; and the poet, while the fertility of his invention is yet unknown, may properly recommend himself by the grace of his language.

He that reveals too much, or promises too little; he that never irritates the intellectual appetite, or that immediately satiates it, equally defeats his own purpose. It is necessary to the pleasure of the reader, that the events should not be anticipated; and how then can his attention be invited, but by grandeur of expression.

No. 159. Tuesday, September 24, 1751.

Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolerem
Possis et magnam morbi deponere partem. Hor.

The power of words, and soothing sounds, appease
The raging pain, and lessen the disease. Francis.

The imbecility with which Verecundulus complains that the presence of a numerous assembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the studious part of mankind, whose education necessarily secludes them in their earlier years from mingled converse, till, at their dismission from schools and academies, they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and, coming forth from the gloom of solitude, are overpowered by the blaze of public life.

It is, perhaps, kindly provided by nature, that, as the feathers and strength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not completed till she is able to fly, so some proportion should be preserved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore restrained by shame, and we remain shackled by timidity till we have learned to speak and act with propriety.

I believe few can review the days of their youth without recollecting temptations which shame rather than virtue enabled them to resist; and opinions which, however erroneous in their principles and dangerous in their consequences, they have panted to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themselves irresistibly depressed by a languid anxiety, which seized them at the moment of utterance, and still gathered strength from their endeavours to resist it.

It generally happens that assurance keeps an even pace with ability; and the fear of miscarriage, which hinders our first attempts, is gradually dissipated as our skill advances towards certainty of success. That bashfulness, therefore, which prevents disgrace, that short and temporary shame which secures us from the danger of lasting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

Bashfulness, however it may incommode for a moment, scarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may flush the cheek, flutter in the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its mischiefs soon pass off without remembrance. It may sometimes exclude pleasure, but seldom opens

any avenue to sorrow or remorse. It is observed somewhere, that *few have repented of having forborn to speak.*

To excite opposition, and inflame malevolence, is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by consciousness of strength. No man finds in himself any inclination to attack or oppose him who confesses his superiority by blushing in his presence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulness receive applause from every voice, and support from every hand. Diffidence may check resolution and obstruct performance, but compensates its embarrassments by more important advantages; it conciliates the proud, and softens the severe, averts envy from excellence, and censure from miscarriage.

It may indeed happen that knowledge and virtue remain too long congealed by this frigorific power, as the principles of vegetation are sometimes obstructed by lingering frosts. He that enters late into a public station, though with all the abilities requisite to the discharge of his duty, will find his powers at first impeded by a timidity which he himself knows to be vicious, and must struggle long against dejection and reluctance, before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulness of ease to the dignity of merit.

For this disease of the mind I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To advise a man unaccustomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation, to tell him whose life was past in the shades of contemplation, that he must not be disconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments of a splendid assembly, is to advise an inhabitant of Brasil or Sumatra not to shiver at an English winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look upon a precipice without emotion. It is to suppose custom instantaneously controllable by reason, and to endeavour to communicate, by precept, that which only time and habit can bestow.

He that hopes by philosophy and contemplation alone to fortify himself against that awe which all, at their first appearance on the stage of life, must feel from the spectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his resolution; and I doubt whether the preservatives which Plato relates Alcibiades to have received from Socrates, when he was about to speak in public, proved sufficient to secure him from the powerful facination.

Yet, as the effects of time may by art and industry be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to consider how this troublesome instinct may be opposed when it exceeds its

just proportion, and, instead of repressing petulance and temerity, silences eloquence, and debilitates force; since, though it cannot be hoped that anxiety should be immediately dissipated, it may be at least somewhat abated; and the passions will operate with less violence when Reason rises against them, than while she either slumbers in neutrality, or mistaking her interest, lends them her assistance.

No cause more frequently produces bashfulness than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an assembly filled with his merit, panting with expectation, and hushed with attention, easily terrifies himself with the dread of disappointing them, and strains his imagination in pursuit of something that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and show that his reputation was not gained by chance. He considers, that what he shall say or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy is suspended upon every syllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the test of time. Under such solicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed, and, by struggling with attempts above her strength, quickly sinks into languishment and despondency?

The most useful medicines are often unpleasing to the taste. Those who are oppressed by their own reputation, will, perhaps, not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unnecessary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the rest of the world. He that considers how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himself. While we see multitudes passing before us, of whom, perhaps, not one appears to deserve our notice, or excite our sympathy, we should remember, that we likewise are lost in the same throng; that the eye which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us; and that the utmost which we can reasonably hope or fear is, to fill a vacant hour with prattle, and be forgotten.

No. 160. Saturday, September 28, 1751.

Inter se convenit ursis. Juv.

Beasts of each kind their followers spare;
Bear lives in amity with bear.

"The world," says Locke, "has people of all sorts." As in the general hurry produced by the superfluities of some, and necessities of others, no man needs to stand still for want of employment, so in the innumerable gradations of ability, and endless varieties of study and inclination, no employment can be vacant for want of a man qualified to discharge it.

Such is probably the natural state of the universe; but it is so much deformed by interest and passion, that the benefit of this adaptation of men to things is not always perceived. The folly or indigence of those who set their service to sale, inclines them to boast of qualifications which they do not possess, and attempt business which they do not understand; and they who have the power of assigning to others the task of life, are seldom honest or seldom happy in their nominations. Patrons are corrupted by avarice, cheated by credulity, or overpowered by resistless solicitation. They are sometimes too strongly influenced by honest prejudices of friendship, or the prevalence of virtuous compassion. For, whatever cool reason may direct, it is not easy for a man of tender and scrupulous goodness to overlook the immediate effect of his own actions, by turning his eyes upon remoter consequences, and to do that which must give present pain, for the sake of obviating evil yet unfelt, or securing advantage in time to come. What is distant is in itself obscure, and, when we have no wish to see it, easily escapes our notice, or takes such a form as desire or imagination bestows upon it.

Every man might, for the same reason, in the multitudes that swarm about him, find some kindred mind with which he could unite in confidence and friendship; yet we see many struggling single about the world, unhappy for want of an associate, and pining with the necessity of confining their sentiments to their own bosoms.

This inconvenience arises, in like manner, from struggles of the will against the understanding. It is not often difficult to find a suitable companion, if every man would be content with such as he is qualified to please. But if vanity tempts him to forsake his rank, and post himself among those

with whom no common interest or mutual pleasure can ever unite him, he must always live in a state of unsocial separation, without tenderness and without trust.

There are many natures which can never approach within a certain distance, and which, when any irregular motive impels them towards contact, seem to start back from each other by some invincible repulsion. There are others which immediately cohere whenever they come into the reach of mutual attraction, and with very little formality or preparation mingle intimately as soon as they meet. Every man, whom either business or curiosity has thrown at large into the world, will recollect many instances of fondness and dislike, which have forced themselves upon him without the intervention of his judgment; of dispositions to court some and avoid others, when he could assign no reason for the preference, or none adequate to the violence of his passions; of influence that acted instantaneously upon his mind, and which no arguments or persuasions could ever overcome.

Among those with whom time and intercourse have made us familiar, we feel our affections divided in different proportions without much regard to moral or intellectual merit. Every man knows some whom he cannot induce himself to trust, though he has no reason to suspect that they would betray him; those to whom he cannot complain, though he never observed them to want compassion; those in whose presence he never can be gay, though excited by invitations to mirth and freedom; and those from whom he cannot be content to receive instruction, though they never insulted his ignorance by contempt or ostentation.

That much regard is to be had to those instincts of kindness and dislike, or that reason should blindly follow them, I am far from intending to inculcate: it is very certain, that by indulgence we may give them strength which they have not from nature; and almost every example of ingratitude and treachery proves, that by obeying them we may commit our happiness to those who are very unworthy of so great a trust. But it may deserve to be remarked, that since few contend much with their inclinations, it is generally vain to solicit the good-will of those whom we perceive thus involuntarily alienated from us; neither knowledge nor virtue will reconcile antipathy; and though officiousness may for a time be admitted, and diligence applauded, they will at last be dismissed with coldness, or discouraged by neglect.

Some have indeed an occult power of stealing upon the affections, of exciting universal benevolence, and disposing every heart to fondness and friendship. But this is a felicity

granted only to the favourites of nature. The greater part of mankind find a different reception from different dispositions; they sometimes obtain unexpected caresses from those whom they never flattered with uncommon regard, and sometimes exhaust all their arts of pleasing without effect. To these it is necessary to look round, and attempt every breast in which they find virtue sufficient for the foundation of friendship: to enter into the crowd, and try whom chance will offer to their notice, till they fix on some temper congenial to their own, as the magnet rolled in the dust collects the fragments of its kindred metal from a thousand particles of other substances.

Every man must have remarked the facility with which the kindness of others is sometimes gained by those to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided almost into different species, which regard one another, for the most part, with scorn and malignity. Each of these classes of the human race has desires, fears, and conversation, vexations and merriment, peculiar to itself; cares which another cannot feel; pleasures which he cannot partake; and modes of expressing every sensation which he cannot understand. That frolic which shakes one man with laughter, will convulse another with indignation; the strain of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence.

To raise esteem we must benefit others, to procure love we must please them. Aristotle observes, that old men do not readily form friendships, because they are not easily susceptible of pleasure. He that can contribute to the hilarity of the vacant hour, or partake with equal gust the favourite amusement; he whose mind is employed on the same objects, and who therefore never harasses the understanding with unaccustomed ideas, will be welcomed with ardour, and left, with regret, unless he destroys those recommendations by faults with which peace and security cannot consist.

It were happy, if, in forming friendships, virtue could concur with pleasure; but the greatest part of human gratifications approach so nearly to vice, that few who make the delight of others their rule of conduct, can avoid disingenuous compliances: yet certainly he that suffers himself to be driven or allured from virtue, mistakes his own interest, since he gains succour by means for which his friend, if ever he becomes wise, must scorn him, and for which at last he must scorn himself.

No. 161. Tuesday, October 1, 1751.

Οιη γαρ φυλλων γενεη, τοιηδε και ανδρων. Hom.

Frail as the leaves that quiver on the sprays,
Like them man flourishes, like them decays.

Mr. Rambler.—Sir—You have formerly observed that curiosity often terminates in barren knowledge, and that the mind is prompted to study and inquiry rather by the uneasiness of ignorance than the hope of profit. Nothing can be of less importance to any present interest, than the fortune of those who have been long lost in the grave, and from whom nothing now can be hoped or feared. Yet, to rouse the zeal of a true antiquary, little more is necessary than to mention a name which mankind have conspired to forget; he will make his way to remote scenes of action through obscurity and contradiction, as Tully sought amidst bushes and brambles the tomb of Archimedes.

It is not easy to discover how it concerns him that gathers the produce, or receives the rent of an estate, to know through what families the land has passed, who is registered in the Conqueror's survey as its possessor, how often it has been forfeited by treason, or how often sold by prodigality. The power or wealth of the present inhabitants of a country cannot be much increased by an inquiry after the names of those barbarians, who destroyed one another, twenty centuries ago, in contests for the shelter of woods or convenience of pasturage. Yet we see that no man can be at rest in the enjoyment of a new purchase, till he has learned the history of his grounds from the ancient inhabitants of the parish, and that no nation omits to record the actions of their ancestors, however bloody, savage, or rapacious.

The same disposition, as different opportuniaies call it forth, discovers itself in great or little things. I have always thought it unworthy of a wise man to slumber in total inactivity, only because he happens to have no employment equal to his ambition or genius; it is therefore my custom to apply my attention to the objects before me; and as I cannot think any place wholly unworthy of notice that affords a habitation to a man of letters, I have collected the history and antiquities of the several garrets in which I have resided.

Quantulacunque estis, vos ego magna voco.

How small to others, but how great to me!

Many of these narratives my industry has been able to extend to a considerable length; but the woman with whom I now lodge has lived only eighteen months in the house, and can give no account of its ancient revolutions; the plasterer having, at her entrance, obliterated, by his white-wash, all the smoky memorials which former tenants had left upon the ceiling, and perhaps drawn the veil of oblivion over politicians, philosophers, and poets.

When I first cheapened my lodgings, the landlady told me, that she hoped I was not an author, for the lodgers on the first floor had stipulated that the upper rooms should not be occupied by a noisy trade. I very readily promised to give no disturbance to her family, and soon despatched a bargain on the usual terms.

I had not slept many nights in my new apartment before I began to inquire after my predecessors, and found my landlady, whose imagination is filled chiefly with her own affairs, very ready to give me information.

Curiosity, like all other desires, produces pain as well as pleasure. Before she began her narrative, I had heated my head with expectations of adventures and discoveries of elegance in disguise, and learning in distress; and was somewhat mortified when I heard that the first tenant was a taylor, of whom nothing was remembered but that he complained of his room for want of light; and after having lodged in it a month, and paid only a week's rent, pawned a piece of cloth which he was trusted to cut out, and was forced to make a precipitate retreat from this quarter of the town.

The next was a young woman newly arrived from the country, who lived for five weeks with great regularity, and became by frequent treats very much the favourite of the family, but at last received visits so frequently from a cousin in Cheapside, that she brought the reputation of the house into danger, and was therefore dismissed with good advice.

The room then stood empty for a fortnight: my landlady began to think that she had judged hardly, and often wished for such another lodger. At last an elderly man of a grave aspect read the bill, and bargained for the room at the very first price that was asked. He lived in close retirement, seldom went out till evening, and then returned early, sometimes cheerful, and at other times dejected. It was remarkable, that, whatever he purchased, he never had small money in his pocket; and, though cool and temperate on other occasions, was always vehement and stormy till he received his change.

He paid his rent with great exactness, and seldom failed once a week to requite my landlady's civility with a supper. At last, such is the fate of human felicity, the house was alarmed at midnight by the constable, who demanded to search the garrets. My landlady assuring him that he had mistaken the door, conducted him up stairs, where he found the tools of a coiner; but the tenant had crawled along the roof of an empty house, and escaped; much to the joy of my landlady, who declares him a very honest man, and wonders why any body should be hanged for making money when such numbers are in want of it. She however confesses that she shall, for the future, always question the character of those who take her garret without beating down the price.

The bill was then placed again in the window, and the poor woman was teased for seven weeks by innumerable passengers, who obliged her to climb with them every hour up five stories, and then disliked the prospect, hated the noise of a public street, thought the stairs narrow, objected to a low ceiling, required the walls to be hung with fresher paper, asked questions about the neighbourhood, could not think of living so far from their acquaintance, wished that the windows had looked to the south rather than the west, told how the door and chimney might have been better disposed, bid her half the price that she asked, or promised to give her earnest the next day, and came no more.

At last, a short meagre man, in a tarnished waistcoat, desired to see the garret, and, when he had stipulated for two long shelves, and a larger table, hired it at a low rate. When the affair was completed, he looked round him with great satisfaction, and repeated some words which the woman did not understand. In two days he brought a great box of books, took possession of his room, and lived very inoffensively, except that he frequently disturbed the inhabitants of the next floor by unseasonable noises. He was generally in bed at noon; but from evening to midnight he sometimes talked aloud with great vehemence, sometimes stamped as in rage, sometimes threw down his poker, then clattered his chairs, then sat down in deep thought, and again burst out into loud vociferations; sometimes he would sigh as oppressed with misery, and sometimes shake with convulsive laughter. When he encountered any of the family, he gave way or bowed, but rarely spoke, except that as he went up stairs he often repeated,

——' Ος υπερτατα δωματα ναιει.

This habitant th' aërial regions boast:

hard words, to which his neighbours listened so often that they learned them without understanding them. What was his employment she did not venture to ask him, but at last heard a printer's boy inquire for the author.

My landlady was very often advised to beware of this strange man, who though he was quiet for the present, might perhaps become outrageous in the hot months: but, as she was punctually paid, she could not find any sufficient reason for dismissing him, till one night he convinced her, by setting fire to his curtains, that it was not safe to have an author for her inmate.

She had then for six weeks a succession of tenants, who left the house on Saturday, and, instead of paying their rent, stormed at their landlady. At last she took in two sisters, one of whom had spent her little fortune in procuring remedies for a lingering disease, and was now supported and attended by the other: she climbed with difficulty to the apartment, where she languished eight weeks without impatience, or lamentation, except for the expense and fatigue which her sister suffered, and then calmly and contentedly expired. The sister followed her to the grave, paid the few debts which they had contracted, wiped away the tears of useless sorrow, and returning to the business of common life, resigned to me the vacant habitation.

Such, Mr. Rambler, are the changes which have happened in the narrow space where my present fortune has fixed my residence. So true it is that amusement and instruction are always at hand for those who have skill and willingness to find them; and so just is the observation of Juvenal, that a single house will show whatever is done or suffered in the world.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 162. Tuesday, October 5, 1751.

Orbus es, et locuples, et Bruto consule natus:
Esse tibi veras credis amicitias?
Sunt vere; sed quas juvenis, quas pauper habebas;
Qui novus est, mortem diligit ille tuam. Mart.

What! old, and rich, and childless too,
And yet believe your friends are true?
Truth might perhaps to those belong,
To those who lov'd you poor and young;
But, trust me, for the new you have,
They'll love you dearly—in your grave. F. Lewis.

One of the complaints uttered by Milton's Samson, in the anguish of blindness, is, that he shall pass his life under the direction of others; that he cannot regulate his conduct by his own knowledge, but must lie at the mercy of those who undertake to guide him.

There is no state more contrary to the dignity of wisdom than perpetual and unlimited dependence, in which the understanding lies useless, and every motion is received from external impulse. Reason is the great distinction of human nature, the faculty by which we approach to some degree of association with celestial intelligences; but as the excellence of every power appears only in its operations, not to have reason, and to have it useless and unemployed, is nearly the same.

Such is the weakness of man, that the essence of things is seldom so much regarded as external and accidental appendages. A small variation of trifling circumstances, a slight change of form by an artificial dress, or a casual difference of appearance by a new light and situation, will conciliate affection or excite abhorrence, and determine us to pursue or to avoid. Every man considers a necessity of compliance with any will but his own as the lowest state of ignominy and meanness; few are so far lost in cowardice or negligence as not to rouse at the first insult of tyranny, and exert all their force against him who usurps their property, or invades any privilege of speech or action. Yet we see often those who never wanted spirit to repel encroachment or oppose violence, at last, by a gradual relaxation of vigilance, delivering up, without capitulation, the fortress which they defended against assault, and laying down unbidden the weapons which they grasped the harder for every attempt to wrest them from their hands. Men eminent for spirit and

wisdom often resign themselves to voluntary pupilage, and suffer their lives to be modelled by officious ignorance, and their choice to be regulated by presumptuous stupidity.

This unresisting acquiescence in the determination of others, may be the consequence of application to some study remote from the beaten track of life, some employment which does not allow leisure for sufficient inspection of those petty affairs by which nature has decreed a great part of our duration to be filled. To a mind thus withdrawn from common objects, it is more eligible to repose on the prudence of another, than to be exposed every moment to slight interruption. The submission which such confidence requires is paid without pain, because it implies no confession of inferiority. The business from which we withdraw our cognizance is not above our abilities, but below our notice. We please our pride with the effects of our influence thus weakly exerted, and fancy ourselves placed in a higher orb, from which we regulate subordinate agents by a slight and distant superintendence. But, whatever vanity or abstraction may suggest, no man can safely do that by others which might be done by himself: he that indulges negligence will quickly become ignorant of his own affairs; and he that trusts without reserve will at last be deceived.

It is, however, impossible but that, as the attention tends strongly towards one thing, it must retire from another; and he that omits the care of domestic business, because he is engrossed by inquiries of more importance to mankind, has, at least, the merit of suffering in a good cause. But there are many who can plead no such extenuation of their folly; who shake off the burden of their station, not that they may soar with less incumbrance to the heights of knowledge or virtue, but that they may loiter at ease and sleep in quiet; and who select for friendship and confidence not the faithful and the virtuous, but the soft, the civil, and compliant.

This openness to flattery is the common disgrace of declining life. When men feel weakness increasing on them, they naturally desire to rest from the struggles of contradiction, the fatigue of reasoning, the anxiety of circumspection; when they are hourly tormented with pains and diseases, they are unable to bear any new disturbance, and consider all opposition as an addition to misery, of which they feel already more than they can patiently endure. Thus desirous of peace, and thus fearful of pain, the old man seldom inquires after any other qualities in those whom he caresses, than quickness in conjecturing his desires, activity in supplying his wants, dexterity in intercepting complaints before they ap-

proach near enough to disturb him, flexibility to his present humour, submission to hasty petulance, and attention to wearisome narrations. By these arts alone many have been able to defeat the claims of kindred and of merit, and to enrich themselves with presents and legacies.

Thrasybulus inherited a large fortune, augmented it by the revenues of several lucrative employments, which he discharged with honour and dexterity. He was at last wise enough to consider, that life should not be devoted wholly to accumulation; and, therefore, retiring to his estate, applied himself to the education of his children, and the cultivation of domestic happiness.

He passed several years in this pleasing amusement, and saw his care amply recompensed: his daughters were celebrated for modesty and elegance, and his sons for learning, prudence, and spirit. In time, the eagerness with which the neighbouring gentlemen courted his alliance obliged him to resign his daughters to other families; the vivacity and curiosity of his sons hurried them out of rural privacy into the open world, from whence they had not soon an inclination to return. This, however, he had always hoped; he pleased himself with the success of his schemes, and felt no inconvenience from solitude, till an apoplexy deprived him of his wife.

Thrasybulus had now no companion; and the maladies of encreasing years having taken from him much of the power of procuring amusement for himself, he thought it necessary to procure some inferior friend who might ease him of his economical solicitudes, and divert him by cheerful conversation. All these qualities he soon recollected in Vafer, a clerk in one of the offices over which he had formerly presided. Vafer was invited to visit his old patron, and being by his station acquainted with the present modes of life, and by constant practice dexterous in business, entertained him with so many novelties, and so readily disentangled his affairs, that he was desired to resign his clerkship, and accept a liberal salary in the house of Thrasybulus.

Vafer, having always lived in a state of dependence, was well versed in the arts by which favour is obtained, and could without repugnance or hesitation, accommodate himself to every caprice, and echo every opinion. He never doubted but to be convinced, nor attempted opposition but to flatter Thrasybulus with the pleasure of a victory. By this practice he found his way into his patron's heart; and, having first made himself agreeable, soon became important. His insidious diligence, by which the laziness of age was gratified,

engrossed the management of affairs; and his petty offices of civility, and occasional intercessions, persuaded the tenants to consider him as their friend and benefactor, and to entreat his enforcement of their representations of hard years, and his countenance to petitions for abatement of rent.

Thrasybulus had now banquetted on flattery, till he could no longer bear the harshness of remonstrance or the insipidity of truth. All contrariety to his own opinion shocked him like a violation of some natural right, and all recommendation of his affairs to his own inspection was dreaded by him as a summons to torture. His children were alarmed by the sudden riches of Vafer, but their complaints were heard by their father with impatience, as the result of a conspiracy against his quiet, and a design to condemn him, for their own advantage, to groan out his last hours in perplexity and drudgery. The daughters retired with tears in their eyes, but the son continued his importunities till he found his inheritance hazarded by his obstinacy. Vafer triumphed over all their efforts, and, continuing to confirm himself in authority, at the death of his master purchased an estate, and bade defiance to inquiry and justice.

No. 163. Tuesday, October 8, 1751.

Mitte superba pati fastidia, spemque caducam
Despice; vive tibi, nam moriere tibi. Seneca.

Bow to no patron's insolence; rely
On no frail hopes, in freedom live and die. F. Lewis.

None of the cruelties exercised by wealth and power upon indigence and dependance is more mischievous in its consequences, or more frequently practised with wanton negligence, than the encouragement of expectations which are never to be gratified, and the elation and depression of the heart by needless vicissitudes of hope and disappointment.

Every man is rich or poor, according to the proportion between his desires and enjoyments; any enlargement of his wishes is therefore equally destructive to happiness with the diminution of possession; and he that teaches another to long for what he never shall obtain, is no less an enemy to his quiet than if he had robbed him of part of his patrimony.

But representations thus refined exhibit no adequate idea of the guilt of pretended friendship; of artifices by which followers are attracted only to decorate the retinue of pomp, and swell the shout of popularity, and to be dismissed with contempt and ignominy, when their leader has succeeded or miscarried, when he is sick of show, and weary of noise. While a man, infatuated with the promises of greatness, wastes his hours and days in attendance and solicitation, the honest opportunities of improving his condition pass by without his notice; he neglects to cultivate his own barren soil, because he expects every moment to be placed in regions of spontaneous fertility, and is seldom roused from his delusion, but by the gripe of distress which he cannot resist, and the sense of evils which cannot be remedied.

The punishment of Tantalus in the infernal regions affords a just image of hungry servility, flattered with the approach of advantage, doomed to lose it before it comes into his reach, always within a few days of felicity, and always sinking back to his former wants:

Καὶ μὴν Τάνταλον εἰσεῖδον χαλέπ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα,
Εστότ' ἐν λίμνῃ, ἑ δὲ προσεπλάζε γενείῳ·
Στεῦτο δὲ διψάων· πιέειν δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ἑλέσθαι.
Οσσάκι γὰρ κύψει ὁ γέρων πιέειν μενεαίνων,
Τοσσάχ' ὕδωρ ἀ πολέσκετ' ἀναῤροχθὲν· ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶ
Γαῖα μελαινα φάνεσκε· καταζηνάσκε δὲ δαίμων.
Δένδρεα δ' ὑψιπέτηλα κατακρηθὲν χέε καρπόν,
Οχναι, καὶ ῥοιαὶ καὶ μηλέαι ἀγλαόκαρποι,
Συκᾶι, τε γλυκεραὶ, καὶ ἐλᾶιαι τηλεθόωσαι.
Τῶν ὁπότ' ἰθύσει ὁ γέρων ἐπι χεῖρὶ μάσασθαι,
Τὰς δ' ἄνεμος ἐπτάσκε ποτὶ νέφεα σκιόεντ...

"I saw," says Homer's Ulysses, "the severe punishment of Tantalus. In a lake, whose waters approached to his lip, he stood burning with thirst, without the power to drink. Whenever he inclined his head to the stream, some deity commanded it to be dry, and the dark earth appeared at his feet. Around him lofty trees spread their fruits to view: the pear, the pomegranate, and the apple, the green olive, and the luscious fig quivered before him, which, whenever he extended his hand to seize them, were snatched by the winds into clouds and obscurity."

This image of misery was perhaps originally suggested to some poet by the conduct of his patron, by the daily contemplation of splendour which he never must partake, by fruit-

less attempts to catch at interdicted happiness, and by the sudden evanescence of his reward, when he thought his labours almost at an end. To groan with poverty, when all about him was opulence, riot, and superfluity, and to find the favours which he had long been encouraged to hope, and had long endeavoured to deserve, squandered at last on nameless ignorance, was to thirst with water flowing before him, and to see the fruits, to which his hunger was hastening, scattered by the wind. Nor can my correspondent, whatever he may have suffered, express with more justness or force the vexations of dependance.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—I am one of those mortals who have been courted and envied as the favourites of the great. Having often gained the prize of composition at the university, I began to hope that I should obtain the same distinction in every other place, and determined to forsake the profession to which I was destined by my parents, and in which the interest of my family would have procured me a very advantageous settlement. The pride of wit fluttered in my heart; and when I prepared to leave the college, nothing entered my imagination but honours, caresses, and rewards; riches without labour, and luxury without expense.

I however delayed my departure for a time, to finish the performance by which I was to draw the first notice of mankind upon me. When it was completed I hurried to London, and considered every moment that passed before its publication, as lost in a kind of neutral existence, and cut off from the golden hours of happiness and fame. The piece was at last printed and disseminated by a rapid sale; I wandered from one place of concourse to another, feasted from morning to night on the repetition of my own praises, and enjoyed the various conjectures of critics, the mistaken candour of my friends, and the impotent malice of my enemies. Some had read the manuscript, and rectified its inaccuracies; others had seen it in a state so imperfect, that they could not forbear to wonder at its present excellence; some had conversed with the author at the coffee-house; and others gave hints that they had lent him money.

I knew that no performance is so favourably read as that of a writer who suppresses his name, and therefore resolved to remain concealed, till those by whom literary reputation is established had given their suffrages too publicly to retract them. At length my bookseller informed me that Aurantius,

the standing patron of merit, had sent inquiries after me, and invited me to his acquaintance.

The time which I had long expected was now arrived. I went to Aurantius with a beating heart, for I looked upon our interview as the critical moment of my destiny. I was received with civilities, which my academic rudeness made me unable to repay; but when I had recovered from my confusion, I prosecuted the conversation with such liveliness and propriety, that I confirmed my new friend in his esteem of my abilities, and was dismissed with the utmost ardour of profession, and raptures of fondness.

I was soon summoned to dine with Aurantius, who had assembled the most judicious of his friends to partake of the entertainment. Again I exerted my powers of sentiment and expression, and again found every eye sparkling with delight, and every tongue silent with attention. I now became familiar at the table of Aurantius, but could never, in his most private or jocund hours, obtain more from him than general declarations of esteem, or endearments of tenderness, which included no particular promise, and therefore conferred no claim. This frigid reserve somewhat disgusted me, and when he complained of three days absence, I took care to inform him with how much importunity of kindness I had been detained by his rival Pollio.

Aurantius now considered his honour as endangered by the desertion of a wit; and, lest I should have an inclination to wander, told me that I could never find a friend more constant and zealous than himself; that indeed he had made no promises, because he hoped to surprise me with advancement, but had been silently promoting my interest, and should continue his good offices, unless he found the kindness of others more desired.

If you, Mr. Rambler, have ever ventured your philosophy within the attraction of greatness, you know the force of such language introduced with a smile of gracious tenderness, and impressed at the conclusion with an air of solemn sincerity. From that instant I gave myself up wholly to Aurantius; and, as he immediately resumed his former gaiety, expected every morning a summons to some employment of dignity and profit. One month succeeded another, and, in defiance of appearance, I still fancied myself nearer to my wishes, and continued to dream of success, and wake to disappointment. At last the failure of my little fortune compelled me to abate the finery which I hitherto thought necessary to the company with whom I associated, and the rank to which I should be raised. Aurantius, from the moment in which he

discovered my poverty, considered me as fully in his power, and afterwards rather permitted my attendance than invited it; thought himself at liberty to refuse my visits, whenever he had other amusements within reach, and often suffered me to wait, without pretending any necessary business. When I was admitted to his table, if any man of rank equal to his own was present, he took occasion to mention my writings, and commend my ingenuity, by which he intended to apologize for the confusion of distinctions, and the improper assortment of his company; and often called upon me to entertain his friends with my productions, as a sportsman delights the squires of his neighbourhood with the curvets of his horse, or the obedience of his spaniels.

To complete my mortification, it was his practise to impose tasks upon me, by requiring me to write upon such subjects as he thought susceptible of ornament and illustration. With these extorted performances he was little satisfied, because he rarely found in them the ideas which his own imagination had suggested, and which he therefore thought more natural than mine.

When the pale of ceremony is broken, rudeness and insult soon enter the breach. He now found that he might safely harass me with vexation, that he had fixed the shackles of patronage upon me, and that I could neither resist him nor escape. At last, in the eighth year of my servitude, when the clamour of creditors was vehement, and my necessity known to be extreme, he offered me a small office, but hinted his expectation that I should marry a young woman with whom he had been acquainted.

I was not so far depressed by my calamities as to comply with this proposal; but, knowing that complaints and expostulations would but gratify his insolence, I turned away with that contempt with which I shall never want spirit to treat the wretch who can outgo the guilt of a robber without the temptation of his profit, and who lures the credulous and thoughtless to maintain the show of his levee, and the mirth of his table, at the expense of honour, happiness, and life.

I am, Sir, &c.

LIBERALIS.

No. 164. Saturday, October 12, 1751.

——*Vitium, Gaure, Catonis habes.* Mart.

Gaurus pretends to Cato's Fame;
And proves—by Cato's vice his claim.

Distinction is so pleasing to the pride of man, that a great part of the pain and pleasure of life arises from the gratification or disappointment of an incessant wish for superiority, from the success or miscarriage of secret competitions, from victories and defeats, of which, though they appear to us of great importance in reality, none are conscious except ourselves.

Proportionate to the prevalence of this love of praise is the variety of means by which its attainment is attempted. Every man, however hopeless his pretensions may appear to all but himself, has some project by which he hopes to rise to reputation; some art by which he imagines that the notice of the world will be attracted; some quality, good or bad, which discriminates him from the common herd of mortals, and by which others may be persuaded to love, or compelled to fear him. The ascents of honour, however steep, never appear inaccessible; he that despairs to scale the precipices by which learning and valour have conducted their favourites, discovers some by-path, or easier acclivity, which, though it cannot bring him to the summit, will yet enable him to overlook those with whom he is now contending for eminence; and we seldom require more to the happiness of the present hour, than to surpass him that stands next before us.

As the greater part of human kind speak and act wholly by imitation, most of those who aspire to honour and applause propose to themselves some example which serves as the model of their conduct and the limit of their hopes. Almost every man, if closely examined, will be found to have enlisted himself under some leader whom he expects to conduct him to renown; to have some hero or other, living or dead, in his view, whose character he endeavours to assume, and whose performances he labours to equal.

When the original is well chosen, and judiciously copied, the imitator often arrives at excellence, which he could never have attained without direction; for few are formed with abilities to discover new possibilities of excellence, and to distinguish themselves by means never tried before.

But folly and idleness often contrive to gratify pride at a cheaper rate: not the qualities which are most illustrious, but those which are of easiest attainment, are selected for imitation; and the honours and rewards which public gratitude has paid to the benefactors of mankind, are expected by wretches who can only imitate them in their vices and defects, or adopt some petty singularities, of which those from whom they are borrowed were secretly ashamed.

No man rises to such a height as to become conspicuous, but he is on one side, censured by undiscerning malice, which reproaches him for his best actions, and slanders his apparent and incontestible excellencies; and idolized on the other by ignorant admiration, which exalts his faults and follies into virtues. It may be observed, that he by whose intimacy his acquaintances imagine themselves dignified, generally diffuses among them his mien and his habits; and indeed, without more vigilance than is generally applied to the regulation of the minuter parts of behaviour, it is not easy, when we converse much with one whose general character excites our veneration, to escape all contagion of his peculiarities, even when we do not deliberately think them worthy of our notice, and when they would have excited laughter or disgust, had they not been protected by their alliance to nobler qualities, and accidentally consorted with knowledge or with virtue.

The faults of a man loved or honoured sometimes steal secretly and imperceptibly upon the wise and virtuous, but, by injudicious fondness or thoughtless vanity, are adopted with design. There is scarce any failing of mind or body, any errour of opinion, or depravity of practice, which, instead of producing shame and discontent, its natural effects, has not at one time or other gladdened vanity with the hopes of praise, and been displayed with ostentatious industry by those who sought kindred minds among the wits or heroes, and could prove their relation only by similitude of deformity.

In consequence of this perverse ambition, every habit which reason condemns may be indulged and avowed. When a man is upbraided with his faults, he may indeed be pardoned if he endeavours to run for shelter to some celebrated name; but it is not to be suffered that, from the retreats to which he fled from infamy, he should issue again with the confidence of conquests, and call upon mankind for praise. Yet we see men that waste their patrimony in luxury, destroy their health with debauchery, and enervate their minds with idleness, because there have been some whom luxury

never could sink into contempt, nor idleness hinder from the praise of genius.

This general inclination of mankind to copy characters in the gross, and the force which the recommendation of illustrious examples adds to the allurements of vice, ought to be considered by all whose character excludes them from the shades of secrecy, as incitements to scrupulous caution and universal purity of manners. No man, however enslaved to his appetites, or hurried by his passions, can, while he preserves his intellects unimpaired, please himself with promoting the corruption of others. He whose merit has enlarged his influence, would surely wish to exert it for the benefit of mankind. Yet such will be the effect of his reputation, while he suffers himself to indulge in any favourite fault, that they who have no hope to reach his excellence, will catch at his failings, and his virtues will be cited to justify the copiers of his vices.

It is particularly the duty of those who consign illustrious names to posterity, to take care lest their readers be misled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be justly condemned as an enemy to goodness, who suffers fondness or interest to confound right with wrong, or to shelter the faults which even the wisest and the best have committed from that ignominy which guilt ought always to suffer, and with which it should be more deeply stigmatized when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth, since we shall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence, unless its turpitude be laid open, and the eye secured from the deception of surrounding splendour.

No. 165. Tuesday, October 15, 1751.

Ην νέος, ἀλλὰ πένης, νῦν γηρῶν, πλουσιός εἰμι.
Ω μόνος ἐκ πάντων οἰκτρὸς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις.
Ος τότε μὲν χρῆσθαι δυνάμην, ὁπότ' οὐδὲ ἐν εἶχον,
Νῦν δ' ὁπότε χρῆσθαι μὴ δύναμαι, τότ' ἔχω. Antiphilus.

Young was I once and poor, now rich and old;
A harder case than mine was never told;
Blest with the power to use them—I had none;
Loaded with *riches* now—the pow'r is gone. F. Lewis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—The writers who have undertaken the unpromising task of moderating desire, exert all the power of their eloquence to show that happiness is not the lot of man, and have, by many arguments and examples, proved the instability of every condition by which envy or ambition are excited. They have set before our eyes all the calamities to which we are exposed from the frailty of nature, the influence of accident, or the stratagems of malice; they have terrified greatness with conspiracies, and riches with anxieties, wit with criticism, and beauty with disease.

All the force of reason, and all the charms of language, are indeed necessary to support positions which every man hears with a wish to confute them. Truth finds an easy entrance into the mind when she is introduced by desire, and attended by pleasure; but when she intrudes uncalled, and brings only fear and sorrow in her train, the passes of the intellect are barred against her by prejudice and passion; if she sometimes forces her way by the batteries of argument, she seldom long keeps possession of her conquests, but is ejected by some favoured enemy, or at best obtains only a nominal sovereignty, without influence and without authority.

That life is short we are all convinced, and yet suffer not that conviction to repress our projects or limit our expectations; that life is miserable we all feel, and yet we believe that the time is near when we shall feel it no longer. But to hope happiness and immortality is equally vain. Our state may indeed be more or less embittered, as our duration may be more or less contracted; yet the utmost felicity which we can ever attain will be little better than alleviation of misery, and we shall always feel more pain from our wants than

pleasure from our enjoyments. The incident which I am going to relate will show, that to destroy the effect of all our success, it is not necessary that any signal calamity should fall upon us, that we should be harassed by implacable persecution, or excruciated by irremediable pains; the brightest hours of prosperity have their clouds, and the stream of life, if it is not ruffled by obstructions, will grow putrid by stagnation.

My father, resolving not to imitate the folly of his ancestors, who had hitherto left the youngest sons encumbrances on the eldest, destined me to a lucrative profession; and I, being careful to lose no opportunity of improvement, was at the usual time at which young men enter the world, well qualified for the exercise of the business which I had chosen.

My eagerness to distinguish myself in public, and my impatience of the narrow scheme of life to which my indigence confined me, did not suffer me to continue long in the town where I was born. I went away as from a place of confinement, with a resolution to return no more, till I should be able to dazzle with my splendour those who now looked upon me with contempt, to reward those who had paid honours to my dawning merit, and to show all who had suffered me to glide by them unknown and neglected, how much they mistook their interest in omitting to propitiate a genius like mine.

Such were my intentions when I sallied forth into the unknown world, in quest of riches and honours, which I expected to procure in a very short time; for what could withhold them from industry and knowledge? He that indulges hope will always be disappointed. Reputation I very soon obtained; but as merit is much more cheaply acknowledged than rewarded, I did not find myself yet enriched in proportion to my celebrity.

I had, however, in time, surmounted the obstacles by which envy and competition obstruct the first attempts of a new claimant, and saw my opponents and censurers tacitly confessing their despair of success, by courting my friendship and yielding to my influence. They who once pursued me, were now satisfied to escape from me; and they who had before thought me presumptuous in hoping to overtake them, had now their utmost wish, if they were permitted, at no great distance, quietly to follow me.

My wants were not madly multiplied as my acquisitions increased, and the time came, at length, when I thought myself enabled to gratify all reasonable desires, and when, therefore, I resolved to enjoy that plenty and serenity which

I had been hitherto labouring to procure, to enjoy them while I was yet neither crushed by age into infirmity, nor so habituated to a particular manner of life as to be unqualified for new studies or entertainments.

I now quitted my profession, and, to set myself at once free from all importunities to resume it, changed my residence, and devoted the remaining part of my time to quiet and amusement. Amidst innumerable projects of pleasure, which restless idleness incited me to form, and of which most, when they came to the moment of execution, were rejected for others of no longer continuance, some accident revived in my imagination the pleasing ideas of my native place. It was now in my power to visit those from whom I had been so long absent, in such a manner as was consistent with my former resolution, and I wondered how it could happen that I had so long delayed my own happiness.

Full of the admiration which I should excite, and the homage which I should receive, I dressed my servants in a more ostentatious livery, purchased a magnificent chariot, and resolved to dazzle the inhabitants of the little town with an unexpected blaze of greatness.

While the preparations that vanity required were made for my departure, which, as workmen will not easily be hurried beyond their ordinary rate, I thought very tedious, I solaced my impatience with imagining the various censures that my appearance would produce; the hopes which some would feel from my bounty; the terrour which my power would strike on others; the awkward respect with which I should be accosted by timorous officiousness; and the distant reverence with which others, less familiar to splendour and dignity, would be contented to gaze upon me. I deliberated a long time, whether I should immediately descend to a level with my former acquaintances, or make my condescension more grateful by a gentle transition from haughtiness and reserve. At length I determined to forget some of my companions, till they discovered themselves by some indubitable token, and to receive the congratulations of others upon my good fortune with indifference, to show that I always expected what I had now obtained. The acclamations of the populace I purposed to reward with six hogsheads of ale, and a roasted ox, and then recommend to them to return to their work.

At last all the trappings of grandeur were fitted, and I began the journey of triumph, which I could have wished to have ended in the same moment: but my horses felt none of their master's ardour, and I was shaken four days upon rug-

ged roads. I then entered the town; and, having graciously let fall the glasses, that my person might be seen, passed slowly through the street. The noise of the wheels brought the inhabitants to their doors, but I could not perceive that I was known by them. At last I alighted, and my name, I suppose, was told by my servants, for the barber stept from the opposite house, and seized me by the hand with honest joy in his countenance, which, according to the rule that I had prescribed to myself, I repressed with a frigid graciousness. The fellow, instead of sinking into dejection, turned away with contempt, and left me to consider how the second salutation should be received. The next friend was better treated, for I soon found that I must purchase by civility that regard which I had expected to enforce by insolence.

There was yet no smoke of bonfires, no harmony of bells, no shout of crowds, nor riot of joy; the business of the day went forward as before; and, after having ordered a splendid supper, which no man came to partake, and which my chagrin hindered me from tasting, I went to bed, where the vexation of disappointment overpowered the fatigue of my journey, and kept me from sleep.

I rose so much humbled by these mortifications, as to inquire after the present state of the town, and found that I had been absent too long to obtain the triumph which had flattered my expectation. Of the friends whose compliments I expected, some had long ago moved to distant provinces, some had lost in the maladies of age all sense of another's prosperity, and some had forgotten our former intimacy amidst care and distress. Of three whom I had resolved to punish for their former offences by a longer continuance of neglect, one was, by his own industry, raised above my scorn, and two were sheltered from it in the grave. All those whom I loved, feared, or hated, all whose envy or whose kindness I had hopes of contemplating with pleasure, were swept away, and their place was filled by a new generation with other views and other competitions; and, among many proofs of the impotence of wealth, I found that it conferred upon me very few distinctions in my native place.

I am, Sir, &c.

SEROTINUS.

No. 166. Saturday, October, 19, 1751.

Pauper eris semper, si pauper es, Æmiliane,
Dantur opes nullis nunc nisi divitibus. Mart.

Once poor, my friend, still you must so remain,
The rich alone have all the means of gain. Ed. Cave.

No complaint has been more frequently repeated in all ages than that of the neglect of merit associated with poverty, and the difficulty with which valuable or pleasing qualities force themselves into view, when they are obscured by indigence. It has been long observed, that native beauty has little power to charm without the ornaments which fortune bestows, and that to want the favour of others is often sufficient to hinder us from obtaining it.

Every day discovers that mankind are not yet convinced of their errour, or that their conviction is without power to influence their conduct; for poverty still continues to produce contempt, and still obstructs the claims of kindred and of virtue. The eye of wealth is elevated towards higher stations, and seldom descends to examine the actions of those who are placed below the level of its notice, and who in distant regions and lower situations are struggling with distress, or toiling for bread. Among the multitudes overwhelmed with insuperable calamity, it is common to find those whom a very little assistance would enable to support themselves with decency, and who yet cannot obtain from near relations, what they see hourly lavished in ostentation, luxury, or frolic.

There are natural reasons why poverty does not easily conciliate affection. He that has been confined from his infancy to the conversation of the lowest classes of mankind, must necessarily want those accomplishments which are the usual means of attracting favour; and though truth, fortitude, and probity, give an indisputable right to reverence and kindness, they will not be distinguished by common eyes, unless they are brightened by elegance of manners, but are cast aside like unpolished gems, of which none but the artist knows the intrinsic value, till their asperities are smoothed and their incrustations rubbed away.

The grossness of vulgar habits obstructs the efficacy of virtue, as impurity and harshness of style impair the force of reason, and rugged numbers turn off the mind from artifice of disposition, and fertility of invention. Few have strength of

reason to overrule the perceptions of sense; and yet fewer have curiosity or benevolence to struggle long against the first impression; he therefore who fails to please in his salutation and address, is at once rejected, and never obtains an opportunity of showing his latent excellencies, or essential qualities.

It is, indeed, not easy to prescribe a successful manner of approach to the distressed or necessitous, whose condition subjects every kind of behaviour equally to miscarriage. He whose confidence of merit incites him to meet, without any apparent sense of inferiority, the eyes of those who flattered themselves with their own dignity, is considered as an insolent leveller, impatient of the just prerogatives of rank and wealth, eager to usurp the station to which he has no right, and to confound the subordinations of society; and who would contribute to the exaltation of that spirit which even want and calamity are not able to restrain from rudeness and rebellion.

But no better success will commonly be found to attend servility and dejection, which often give pride the confidence to treat them with contempt. A request made with diffidence and timidity is easily denied, because the petitioner himself seems to doubt its fitness.

Kindness is generally reciprocal; we are desirous of pleasing others, because we receive pleasure from them; but by what means can the man please, whose attention is engrossed by his distresses, and who has no leisure to be officious; whose will is restrained by his necessities, and who has no power to confer benefits; whose understanding is impeded by ignorance?

It is yet a more offensive discouragement, that the same actions performed by different hands produce different effects, and, instead of rating the man by his performances, we rate too frequently the performance by the man. It sometimes happens in the combinations of life, that important services are performed by inferiours; but though their zeal and activity may be paid by pecuniary rewards, they seldom excite that flow of gratitude, or obtain that accumulation of recompense, with which all think it their duty to acknowledge the favour of those who descend to their assistance from a higher elevation. To be obliged, is to be in some respect inferiour to another; and few willingly indulge the memory of an action which raises one whom they have always been accustomed to think below them, but satisfy themselves with faint praise and penurious payment, and then drive it from their

own minds, and endeavour to conceal it from the knowledge of others.

It may be always objected to the services of those who can be supposed to want a reward, that they were produced not by kindness but interest; they are, therefore, when they are no longer wanted, easily disregarded as arts of insinuation, or stratagems of selfishness. Benefits which are received as gifts from wealth, are exacted as debts from indigence; and he that in a high station is celebrated for superfluous goodness, would in a meaner condition have barely been confessed to have done his duty.

It is scarcely possible for the utmost benevolence to oblige, when exerted under the disadvantages of great inferiority; for, by the habitual arrogance of wealth, such expectations are commonly formed as no zeal or industry can satisfy; and what regard can he hope, who has done less than was demanded from him?

There are indeed kindnesses conferred which were never purchased by precedent favours, and there is an affection not arising from gratitude or gross interest, by which similar natures are attracted to each other, without prospect of any other advantage than the pleasure of exchanging sentiments, and the hope of confirming their esteem of themselves by the approbation of each other. But this spontaneous fondness seldom rises at the sight of poverty, which every one regards with habitual contempt, and of which the applause is no more courted by vanity, than the countenance is solicited by ambition. The most generous and disinterested friendship must be resolved at last into the love of ourselves: he therefore whose reputation or dignity inclines us to consider his esteem as a testimonial of desert, will always find our hearts open to his endearments. We every day see men of eminence followed with all the obsequiousness of dependence, and courted with all the blandishments of flattery, by those who want nothing from them but professions of regard, and who think themselves liberally rewarded by a bow, a smile, or an embrace.

But those prejudices which every mind feels more or less in favour of riches, ought, like other opinions, which only custom and example have impressed upon us, to be in time subjected to reason. We must learn how to separate the real character from extraneous adhesions and casual circumstances, to consider closely him whom we are about to adopt or to reject; to regard his inclinations as well as his actions; to trace out those virtues which lie torpid in the heart for want of opportunity, and those vices that lurk unseen by the absence of temptation; that when we find worth faintly

shooting in the shades of obscurity, we may let in light and sunshine upon it, and ripen barren volition into efficacy and power.

No. 167. Tuesday, October 22, 1751.

Candida perpetuo residet Concordia lecto,
Tamque pari semper sit Venus æqua jugo.
Diligas illa senem quondam, sed et ipsa marito
Tunc quoque cum fuerit non videatur anus. Mart.

Their nuptial bed may smiling Concord dress,
And Venus still the happy union bless!
Wrinkled with age, may mutual love and truth
To their dim eyes recall the bloom of youth. F. Lewis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—It is not common to envy those with whom we cannot easily be placed in comparison. Every man sees without malevolence the progress of another in the tracts of life, which he has himself no desire to tread, and hears, without inclination to cavils or contradiction, the renown of those whose distance will not suffer them to draw the attention of mankind from his own merit. The sailor never thinks it necessary to contest the lawyer's abilities; nor would the Rambler, however jealous of his reputation, be much disturbed by the success of rival wits at Agra or Ispahan.

We do not therefore ascribe to you any superlative degree of virtue, when we believe that we may inform you of our change of condition without danger of malignant fascination; and that when you read of the marriage of your correspondents Hymenæus and Tranquilla, you will join your wishes to those of their other friends for the happy event of an union in which caprice and selfishness had so little part.

There is at least this reason why we should be less deceived in our connubial hopes than many who enter into the same state, that we have allowed our minds to form no unreasonable expectations, nor vitiated our fancies, in the soft hours of courtship, with visions of felicity which human power cannot bestow, or of perfection which human virtue cannot attain. That impartiality with which we endeavour to inspect the manners of all whom we have known was never so much overpowered by our passion, but that we discovered some faults and weaknesses in each other; and joined our

hands in conviction, that as there are advantages to be enjoyed in marriage, there are inconveniences likewise to be endured; and that, together with confederate intellects and auxiliar virtues, we must find different opinions and opposite inclinations.

We however flatter ourselves, for who is not flattered by himself as well as by others on the day of marriage? that we are eminently qualified to give mutual pleasure. Our birth is without any such remarkable disparity as can give either an opportunity of insulting the other with pompous names and splendid alliances, or of calling in, upon any domestic controversy, the overbearing assistance of powerful relations. Our fortune was equally suitable, so that we meet without any of those obligations, which always produce reproach or suspicion of reproach, which, though they may be forgotten in the gaieties of the first month, no delicacy will always suppress, or of which the suppression must be considered as a new favour, to be repaid by tameness and submission, till gratitude takes the place of love, and the desire of pleasing degenerates by degrees into the fear of offending.

The settlements caused no delay: for we did not trust our affairs to the negotiation of wretches who would have paid their court by multiplying stipulations. Tranquilla scorned to detain any part of her fortune from him into whose hand she delivered up her person; and Hymenæus thought no act of baseness more criminal than his who enslaves his wife by her own generosity, who, by marrying without a jointure, condemns her to all the dangers of accident and caprice, and at last boasts his liberality, by granting what only the indiscretion of her kindness enabled him to withhold. He therefore received on the common terms the portion which any other woman might have brought him, and reserved all the exuberance of acknowledgment for those excellencies which he has yet been able to discover only in Tranquilla.

We did not pass the weeks of courtship like those who consider themselves as taking the last draught of pleasure, and resolve not to quit the bowl without a surfeit, or who know themselves about to set happiness to hazard, and endeavour to lose their sense of danger in the ebriety of perpetual amusement, and whirl round the gulf before they sink. Hymenæus often repeated a medical axiom, that *the succours of sickness ought not to be wasted in health.* We know that however our eyes may yet sparkle, and our hearts bound at the presence of each other, the time of listlessness and satiety, of peevishness and discontent, must come at last, in which we shall be driven for relief to shows and recreations; that the

uniformity of life must be sometimes diversified, and the vacuities of conversation sometimes supplied. We rejoice in the reflection that we have stores of novelty yet unexhausted, which may be opened when repletion shall call for change, and gratifications yet untasted, by which life, when it shall become vapid or bitter, may be restored to its former sweetness and sprightliness, and again irritate the appetite, and again sparkle in the cup.

Our time will probably be less tasteless than that of those whom the authority and avarice of parents unite almost without their consent in their early years, before they have accumulated any fund of reflection, or collected materials for mutual entertainment. Such we have often seen rising in the morning to cards, and retiring in the afternoon to dose, whose happiness was celebrated by their neighbours, because they happened to grow rich by parsimony, and to be kept quiet by insensibility, and agreed to eat and to sleep together.

We have both mingled with the world, and are therefore no strangers to the faults and virtues, the designs and competitions, the hopes and fears of our cotemporaries. We have both amused our leisure with books, and can therefore recount the events of former times, or cite the dictates of ancient wisdom. Every occurrence furnishes us with some hint which one or the other can improve, and if it should happen that memory or imagination fail us, we can retire to no idle or unimproving solitude.

Though our characters, beheld at a distance, exhibit this general resemblance, yet, a nearer inspection discovers such a dissimilitude of our habitudes and sentiments, as leaves each some peculiar advantages, and affords that *concordia discors*, that suitable disagreement which is always necessary to intellectual harmony. There may be a total diversity of ideas which admits no participation of the same delight, and there may likewise be such a conformity of notions as leaves neither any thing to add to the decisions of the other. With such contrariety there can be no peace, with such similarity there can be no pleasure. Our reasonings, though often formed upon different views, terminate generally in the same conclusion. Our thoughts, like rivulets issuing from distant springs, are each impregnated in its course with various mixtures, and tinged by infusions unknown to the other, yet, at last, easily unite into one stream, and purify themselves by the gentle effervescence of contrary qualities.

These benefits we receive in a greater degree as we converse without reserve, because we have nothing to conceal. We have no debts to be paid by imperceptible deduction from

avowed expenses, no habits to be indulged by the private subserviency of a favoured servant, no private interviews with needy relations, no intelligence with spies placed upon each other. We considered marriage as the most solemn league of perpetual friendship, a state from which artifice and concealment are to be banished for ever, and in which every act of dissimulation is a breach of faith.

The impetuous vivacity of youth, and that ardour of desire, which the first sight of pleasure naturally produces, have long ceased to hurry us into irregularity and vehemence; and experience has shown us that few gratifications are too valuable to be sacrificed to complaisance. We have thought it convenient to rest from the fatigue of pleasure, and now only continue that course of life into which we had before entered, confirmed in our choice by mutual approbation, supported in our resolution by mutual encouragement, and assisted in our efforts by mutual exhortation.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is our prospect of life, a prospect which, as it is beheld with more attention, seems to open more extensive happiness, and spreads, by degrees, into the boundless regions of eternity. But if all our prudence has been vain, and we are doomed to give one instance more of the uncertainty of human discernment, we shall comfort ourselves amidst our disappointments, that we were not betrayed by such delusions as caution could not escape, since we sought happiness only in the arms of virtue. We are, sir,

Your humble servants,

HYMENÆUS,
TRANQUILLA.

No. 168. SATURDAY, October, 26, 1751.

——Decipit
Frons prima multos, rara mens intelligit
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo. PHÆDRUS.

The tinsel glitter, and the specious mien,
Delude the most; few pry behind the scene.

IT has been observed by Boileau, that "a mean or common thought expressed in pompous diction, generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low and vulgar language; because the number is greater of those whom custom has enabled to judge of words, than whom study has qualified to examine things."

This solution might satisfy, if such only were offended with meanness of expression as are unable to distinguish propriety of thought, and to separate propositions or images from the vehicles by which they are conveyed to the understanding. But this kind of disgust is by no means confined to the ignorant or superficial; it operates uniformly and universally upon readers of all classes; every man, however profound or abstracted, perceives himself irresistibly alienated by low terms; they who profess the most zealous adherence to truth are forced to admit that she owes part of her charms to her ornaments; and loses much of her power over the soul, when she appears disgraced by a dress uncouth or ill adjusted.

We are all offended by low terms, but are not disgusted alike by the same compositions, because we do not all agree to censure the same terms as low. No word is naturally or intrinsically meaner than another; our opinion therefore of words, as of other things arbitrarily and capriciously established, depends wholly upon accident and custom. The cottager thinks those apartments splendid and spacious, which an inhabitant of palaces will despise for their inelegance; and to him who has passed most of his hours with the delicate and polite, many expressions will seem sordid, which another, equally acute, may hear without offence; but a mean term never fails to displease him to whom it appears mean, as poverty is certainly and invariably despised, though he who is poor in the eyes of some, may by others be envied for his wealth.

Words become low by the occasions to which they are applied, or the general character of them who use them: and the disgust which they produce arises from the revival of those images with which they are commonly united. Thus if, in the most solemn discourse, a phrase happens to occur which has been successfully employed in some ludicrous narrative, the gravest auditor finds it difficult to refrain from laughter, when they who are not prepossessed by the same accidental association, are utterly unabled to guess the reason of his merriment. Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are banished from elegant writing or conversation in another, because they are in time debased by vulgar mouths, and can be no longer heard without the involuntary recollection of unpleasing images.

When Macbeth is confirming himself in the horrid purpose of stabbing his king, he breaks out amidst his emotions into a wish natural to a murderer:

——Come, thick night!
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes;
Nor heav'n peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, Hold, hold!

In this passage is exerted all the force of poetry; that force which calls new powers into being, which embodies sentiment, and animates matter; yet, perhaps, scarce any man now peruses it without some disturbance of his attention from the counteraction of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the presence of night, invested, not in common obscurity, but in the smoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this invocation is destroyed by the insertion of an epithet now seldom heard but in the stable, and *dun* night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we start into raptures when some hero of the Iliad tells us that δόρυ μάνιται, his lance rages with eagerness to destroy; if we are alarmed at the terrour of the soldiers commanded by Cæsar to hew down the sacred grove, who dreaded, says Lucan, lest the axe aimed at the oak should fly back upon the striker:

——Si robora sacra ferirent,
In sua credebant redituras membra secures;

None dares with impious steel the grove to rend,
Lest on himself the destin'd stroke descend;

we cannot surely but sympathize with the horrours of a wretch about to murder his master, his friend, his benefactor, who suspects that the weapon will refuse its office, and start back from the breast which he is preparing to violate. Yet this sentiment is weakened by the name of an instrument used by butchers and cooks in the meanest employments; we do not immediately conceive that any crime of importance is to be committed with a *knife;* or who does not, at last, from the long habit of connecting a knife with sordid offices, feel aversion rather than terrour?

Macbeth proceeds to wish, in the madness of guilt, that the inspection of heaven may be intercepted, and that he may, in the involutions of infernal darkness, escape the eye of providence. This is the utmost extravagance of determined wickedness; yet this is so debased by two unfortunate words, that while I endeavour to impress on my reader the energy of the sentiment, I can scarce check my risibility, when the expression forces itself upon my mind; for who,

without some relaxation of his gravity, can hear of the avengers of guilt *peeping through a blanket?*

These imperfections of diction are less obvious to the reader, as he is less acquainted with common usages; they are therefore wholly imperceptible to a foreigner, who learns our language from books, and will strike a solitary academic less forcibly than a modish lady.

Among the numerous requisites that most occur to complete an author, few are of more importance than an early entrance into the living world. The seeds of knowledge may be planted in solitude, but must be cultivated in public. Argumentation may be taught in colleges, and theories formed in retirement; but the artifice of embellishment, and the powers of attraction, can be gained only by general converse.

An acquaintance with prevailing customs and fashionable elegance is necessary likewise for other purposes. The injury that grand imagery suffers from unsuitable language, personal merit may fear from rudeness and indelicacy. When the success of Æneas depended on the favour of the queen upon whose coasts he was driven, his celestial protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against rejection by his piety or bravery, but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever desires, for his writings or himself, what none can reasonably contemn, the favour of mankind, must add grace to strength, and make his thoughts agreeable as well as useful. Many complain of neglect who never tried to attract regard. It cannot be expected that the patrons of science or virtue should be solicitous to discover excellencies, which they who possess them shade and disguise. Few have abilities so much needed by the rest of the world as to be caressed on their own terms; and he that will not condescend to recommend himself by external embellishments, must submit to the fate of just sentiment meanly expressed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is understood.

No. 169. Tuesday, October 29, 1751.

Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorsos sapit ungues. Persius.

No blood from bitten nails those poems drew;
But churn'd, like spittle, from the lips they flew. Dryden.

Natural historians assert that whatever is formed for long duration arrives slowly to its maturity. Thus the firmest timber is of tardy growth, and animals generally exceed each other in longevity, in proportion to the time between their conception and their birth.

The same observation may be extended to the offspring of the mind. Hasty compositions, however they please at first by flowery luxuriance, and spread in the sunshine of temporary favour, can seldom endure the change of seasons, but perish at the first blast of criticism or frost of neglect. When Apelles was reproached with the paucity of his productions, and the incessant attention with which he retouched his pieces, he condescended to make no other answer than that *he painted for perpetuity.*

No vanity can more justly incur contempt and indignation than that which boasts of negligence and hurry. For who can bear with patience the writer who claims such superiority to the rest of his species, as to imagine that mankind are at leisure for attention to his extemporary sallies, and that posterity will reposite his casual effusions among the treasures of ancient wisdom?

Men have sometimes appeared of such transcendent abilities, that their slighest and most cursory performances excel all that labour and study can enable meaner intellects to compose; as there are regions of which the spontaneous products cannot be equalled in other soils by care and culture. But it is no less dangerous for any man to place himself in this rank of understanding, and fancy that he is born to be illustrious without labour, than to omit the cares of husbandry, and expect from his ground the blossoms of Arabia.

The greatest part of those who congratulate themselves upon their intellectual dignity, and usurp the privileges of genius, are men whom only themselves would ever have marked out as enriched by uncommon liberalites of nature, or entitled to veneration and immortality on easy terms. This ardour of confidence is usually found among those who, having not enlarged their notions by books or conversation, are persuaded, by the partiality which we all feel in our own

favour, that they have reached the summit of excellence, because they discover none higher than themselves; and who acquiesce in the first thoughts that occur, because their scantiness of knowledge allows them little choice; and the narrowness of their views affords them no glimpse of perfection, of that sublime idea which human industry has from the first ages been vainly toiling to approach. They see a little, and believe that there is nothing beyond their sphere of vision, as the Patuecos of Spain, who inhabited a small valley, conceived the surrounding mountains to be the boundaries of the world. In proportion as perfection is more distinctly conceived, the pleasure of contemplating our own performances will be lessened; it may therefore be observed, that they who most deserve praise are often afraid to decide in favour of their own performances; they know how much is still wanting to their completion, and wait with anxiety and terrour the determination of the public. "I please every one else," says Tully, "but never satisfy myself."

It has often been inquired, why, notwithstanding the advances of later ages in science, and the assistance which the infusion of so many new ideas has given us, we fall below the ancients in the art of composition. Some part of their superiority may be justly ascribed to the graces of their language, from which the most polished of the present European tongues are nothing more than barbarous degenerations. Some advantage they might gain merely by priority, which put them in possession of the most natural sentiments, and left us nothing but servile repetition or forced conceits. But the greater part of their praise seems to have been the just reward of modesty and labour. Their sense of human weakness confined them commonly to one study, which their knowledge of the extent of every science engaged them to prosecute with indefatigable diligence.

Among the writers of antiquity I remember none except Statius who ventures to mention the speedy production of his writings, either as an extenuation of his faults, or a proof of his facility. Nor did Statius, when he considered himself as a candidate for lasting reputation, think a closer attention unnecessary, but amidst all his pride and indigence, the two great hasteners of modern poems, employed twelve years upon the Thebiad, and thinks his claim to renown proportionate to his labour.

Thebias, multa cruciata lima,
Tentat, audaci fide, Mantuanæ
Claudia famæ.

Polish'd with endless toil, my lays
At length aspire to Mantuan praise.

Ovid indeed apologizes in his banishment for the imperfection of his letters, but mentions his want of leisure to polish them, as an addition to his calamities; and was so far from imagining revisals and corrections unnecessary, that at his departure from Rome he threw his Metamorphoses into the fire, lest he should be disgraced by a book which he could not hope to finish.

It seems not often to have happened that the same writer aspired to reputation in verse and prose; and of those few that attempted such diversity of excellence, I know not that even one succeeded. Contrary characters they never imagined a single mind able to support, and therefore no man is recorded to have undertaken more than one kind of dramatic poetry.

What they had written, they did not venture in their first fondness to thrust into the world, but, considering the impropriety of sending forth inconsiderately that which cannot be recalled, deferred the publication, if not nine years, according to the direction of Horace, yet till their fancy was cooled after the raptures of invention and the glare of novelty had ceased to dazzle the judgment.

There were in those days no weekly or diurnal writers; *multa dies, et multa litura*, much time, and many rasures, were considered as indispensable requisites; and that no other method of attaining lasting praise has been yet discovered, may be conjectured from the blotted manuscripts of Milton now remaining, and from the tardy emission of Pope's compositions, delayed more than once till the incidents to which they alluded were forgotten, till his enemies were secure from his satire, and, what to an honest mind must be more painful, his friends were deaf to his encomiums.

To him, whose eagerness of praise hurries his productions soon into the light, many imperfections are unavoidable, even where the mind furnishes the materials, as well as regulates their disposition, and nothing depends upon search or information. Delay opens new veins of thought, the subject dismissed for a time appears with a new train of dependent images, the accidents of reading or conversation supply new ornaments or allusions, or mere intermission of the fatigue of thinking enables the mind to collect new force, and make new excursions. But all those benefits came too late for him, who, when he was weary with labour, snatched at the recompense, and gave his work to his friends and his enemies

as soon as impatience and pride persuaded him to conclude it.

One of the most pernicious effects of haste is obscurity. He that teems with a quick succession of ideas, and perceives how one sentiment produces another, easily believes that he can clearly express what he so strongly comprehends; he seldom suspects his thoughts of embarrassment, while he preserves in his own memory the series of connection, or his diction of ambiguity, while only one sense is present to his mind. Yet if he has been employed on an abstruse or complicated argument, he will find, when he has a while withdrawn his mind, and returns as a new reader to his work, that he has only a conjectural glimpse of his own meaning, and that to explain it to those whom he desires to instruct, he must open his sentiments, disentangle his method, and alter his arrangement.

Authors and lovers always suffer some infatuation, from which only absence can set them free; and every man ought to restore himself to the full exercise of his judgment, before he does that which he cannot do improperly without injuring his honour and his quiet.

No. 170. Saturday, November 2, 1751.

Confiteor: si quid prodest delicta fateri. Ovid.

I grant the charge; forgive the fault confess'd.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I am one of those beings from whom many, that melt at the sight of all other misery, think it meritorious to withhold relief; one whom the rigour of virtuous indignation dooms to suffer without complaint, and perish without regard; and whom I myself have formerly insulted in the pride of reputation and security of innocence.

I am of a good family, but my father was burthened with more children than he could decently support. A wealthy relation, as he travelled from London to his country seat, condescending to make him a visit, was touched with compassion of his narrow fortune, and resolved to ease him of part of his charge, by taking the care of a child upon himself. Distress on one side, and ambition on the other, were too powerful for parental fondness, and the little family pass-

ed in review before him, that he might make his choice. I was then ten years old, and, without knowing for what purpose I was called to my great cousin, endeavoured to recommend myself by my best courtesy, sung him my prettiest song, told the last story that I had read, and so much endeared myself by my innocence, that he declared his resolution to adopt me, and to educate me with his own daughters.

My parents felt the common struggles at the thought of parting, and *some natural tears they dropp'd, but wip'd them soon.* They considered, not without that false estimation of the value of wealth which poverty long continued always produces, that I was raised to higher rank than they could give me, and to hopes of more ample fortune than they could bequeath. My mother sold some of her ornaments to dress me in such a manner as might secure me from contempt at my first arrival; and, when she dismissed me, pressed me to her bosom with an embrace that I still feel, gave me some precepts of piety, which, however neglected, I have not forgotten, and uttered prayers for my final happiness, of which I have not yet ceased to hope that they will at last be granted.

My sisters envied my new finery, and seemed not much to regret our separation: my father conducted me to the stage-coach with a kind of cheerful tenderness; and in a very short time I was transported to splendid apartments, and a luxurious table, and grew familiar to show, noise, and gaiety.

In three years my mother died, having implored a blessing on her family with her last breath. I had little opportunity to indulge a sorrow which there was none to partake with me, and therefore soon ceased to reflect much upon my loss. My father turned all his care upon his other children, whom some fortunate adventures and unexpected legacies enabled him, when he died four years after my mother, to leave in a condition above their expectations.

I should have shared the increase of his fortune, and had once a portion assigned me in his will; but my cousin assuring him that all care for me was needless, since he had resolved to place me happily in the world, directed him to divide my part amongst my sisters.

Thus I was thrown upon dependence without resource. Being now at an age in which young women are initiated into company, I was no longer to be supported in my former character but at considerable expense; so that partly lest I should waste money, and partly lest my appearance might draw too many compliments and assiduities, I was insensibly degraded from my equality, and enjoyed few privileges above the head servant but that of receiving no wages.

I felt every indignity, but knew that resentment would precipitate my fall. I therefore endeavoured to continue my importance by little services and active officiousness, and, for a time, preserved myself from neglect, by withdrawing all pretences to competition, and studying to please rather than to shine. But my interest, notwithstanding this expedient, hourly declined, and my cousin's favourite maid began to exchange repartees with me, and consult me about the alterations of a cast gown.

I was now completely depressed; and though I had seen mankind enough to know the necessity of outward cheerfulness, I often withdrew to my chamber to vent my grief, or turn my condition in my mind, and examine by what means I might escape from perpetual mortification. At last my schemes and sorrows were interrupted by a sudden change of my relation's behaviour, who one day took an occasion, when we were left together in a room, to bid me suffer myself no longer to be insulted, but assume the place which he always intended me to hold in the family. He assured me that his wife's preference of her own daughters should never hurt me; and, accompanying his professions with a purse of gold, ordered me to bespeak a rich suit at the mercer's, and to apply privately to him for money when I wanted it, and insinuate that my other friends supplied me, which he would take care to confirm.

By this stratagem, which I did not then understand, he filled me with tenderness and gratitude, compelled me to repose on him as my only support, and produced a necessity of private conversation. He often appointed interviews at the house of an acquaintance, and sometimes called on me with a coach, and carried me abroad. My sense of his favour, and the desire of retaining it, disposed me to unlimited complaisance, and, though I saw his kindness grow every day more fond, I did not suffer any suspicion to enter my thoughts. At last the wretch took advantage of the familiarity which he enjoyed as my relation, and the submission which he exacted as my benefactor, to complete the ruin of an orphan whom his own promises had made indigent, whom his indulgence had melted, and his authority subdued.

I know not why it should afford subject of exultation to overpower on any terms the resolution, or surprise the caution of a girl; but of all the boasters that deck themselves in the spoils of innocence and beauty, they surely have the least pretensions to triumph, who submit to owe their success to some casual influence. They neither employ the graces of fancy, nor the force of understanding, in their attempts;

they cannot please their vanity with the art of their approaches, the delicacy of their adulations, the elegance of their address, or the efficacy of their eloquence; nor applaud themselves as possessed of any qualities by which affection is attracted. They surmount no obstacles, they defeat no rivals, but attack only those who cannot resist, and are often content to possess the body without any solicitude to gain the heart.

Many of those despicable wretches does my present acquaintance with infamy and wickedness enable me to number among the heroes of debauchery: reptiles whom their own servants would have despised, had they not been their servants, and with whom beggary would have disdained intercourse, had she not been lured by hopes of relief. Many of the beings which are now rioting in taverns, or shivering in the streets, have been corrupted, not by arts of gallantry which stole gradually upon the affections and laid prudence asleep, but by the fear of losing benefits which were never intended, or of incurring resentment which they could not escape; some have been frighted by masters, and some awed by guardians into ruin.

Our crime had its usual consequence, and he soon perceived that I could not long continue in his family. I was distracted at the thought of the reproach which I now believed inevitable. He comforted me with hopes of eluding all discovery, and often upbraided me with the anxiety which perhaps none but himself saw in my countenance; but at last mingled his assurances of protection and maintenance with menaces of total desertion, if, in the moments of perturbation, I should suffer his secret to escape, or endeavour to throw on him any part of my infamy.

Thus passed the dismal hours, till my retreat could no longer be delayed. It was pretended that my relations had sent for me to a distant county, and I entered upon a state which shall be described in my next letter.

I am, Sir, &c.

MISELLA.

No. 171. Tuesday, November 5, 1751.

Tædet cœli convexa tueri. Virg.

Dark is the sun, and loathsome is the day.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Misella now sits down to continue her narrative. I am convinced that nothing would more powerfully preserve youth from irregularity, or guard inexperience from seduction, than a just description of the condition into which the wanton plunges herself, and therefore hope that my letter may be a sufficient antidote to my example.

After the distraction, hesitation, and delays which the timidity of guilt naturally produces, I was removed to lodgings in a distant part of the town, under one of the characters commonly assumed upon such occasions. Here, being by my circumstances condemned to solitude, I passed most of my hours in bitterness and anguish. The conversation of the people with whom I was placed was not at all capable of engaging my attention, or dispossessing the reigning ideas. The books which I carried to my retreat were such as heightened my abhorrence of myself; for I was not so far abandoned as to sink voluntarily into corruption, or endeavour to conceal from my own mind the enormity of my crime.

My relation remitted none of his fondness, but visited me so often, that I was sometimes afraid lest his assiduity should expose him to suspicion. Whenever he came he found me weeping, and was therefore less delightfully entertained than he expected. After frequent expostulations upon the unreasonableness of my sorrow, and innumerable protestations of everlasting regard, he at last found that I was more affected with the loss of my innocence than the danger of my fame, and, that he might not be disturbed by my remorse, began to lull my conscience with the opiates of irreligion. His arguments were such as my course of life has since exposed me often to the necessity of hearing, vulgar, empty and fallacious, yet, they at first confounded me by their novelty, filled me with doubt and perplexity, and interrupted that peace which I began to feel from the sincerity of my repentance, without substituting any other support. I listened awhile to his impious gabble; but its influence was soon overpowered by natural reason and early education, and the convictions

which this new attempt gave me of his baseness completed my abhorrence. I have heard of barbarians, who, when tempests drive ships upon their coast, decoy them to the rocks that they may plunder their lading—and have always thought that wretches, thus merciless in their depredations, ought to be destroyed by a general insurrection of all social beings; yet, how light is this guilt to the crime of him, who, in the agitations of remorse, cuts away the anchor of piety, and when he has drawn aside credulity from the paths of virtue, hides the light of heaven which would direct her to return! I had hitherto considered him as a man equally betrayed with myself by the concurrence of appetite and opportunity; but I now saw with horrour that he was contriving to perpetuate his gratification, and was desirous to fit me to his purpose, by complete and radical corruption.

To escape, however, was not yet in my power. I could support the expenses of my condition, only by the continuance of his favour. He provided all that was necessary, and in a few weeks congratulated me upon my escape from the danger which we had both expected with so much anxiety. I then began to remind him of his promise to restore me with my fame uninjured to the world. He promised me in general terms, that nothing should be wanting which his power could add to my happiness, but forbore to release me from my confinement. I knew how much my reception in the world depended upon my speedy return, and was therefore outrageously impatient of his delays, which I now perceived to be only artifices of lewdness. He told me at last, with an appearance of sorrow, that all hopes of restoration to my former state were forever precluded; that chance had discovered my secret, and malice divulged it; and that nothing now remained, but to seek a retreat more private, where curiosity or hatred could never find us.

The rage, anguish, and resentment, which I felt at this account are not to be expressed. I was in so much dread of reproach and infamy, which he represented as pursuing me with full cry, that I yielded myself implicitly to his disposal, and was removed, with a thousand studied precautions, through bye-ways and dark passages to another house, where I harassed him with perpetual solicitations for a small annuity that might enable me to live in the country in obscurity and innocence.

This demand he at first evaded with ardent professions, but in time appeared offended at my importunity and distrust; and having one day endeavoured to sooth me with uncommon expressions of tenderness, when he found my discontent

immoveable, left me with some inarticulate murmurs of anger. I was pleased that he was at last roused to sensibility, and, expecting that at his next visit he would comply with my request, lived with great tranquillity upon the money in my hands, and was so much pleased with this pause of persecution, that I did not reflect how much his absence had exceeded the usual intervals, till I was alarmed with the danger of wanting subsistence. I then suddenly contracted my expenses, but was unwilling to supplicate for assistance. Necessity, however, soon overcame my modesty or my pride, and I applied to him by a letter, but had no answer. I writ in terms more pressing, but without effect. I then sent an agent to inquire after him, who informed me, that he had quitted his house, and was gone with his family to reside for some time on his estate in Ireland.

However shocked at this abrupt departure, I was yet unwilling to believe that he could wholly abandon me, and therefore, by the sale of my clothes, I supported myself, expecting that every post would bring me relief. Thus I passed seven months between hope and dejection, in a gradual approach to poverty and distress, emaciated with discontent, and bewildered with uncertainty. At last, my landlady, after many hints of the necessity of a new lover, took the opportunity of my absence to search my boxes, and, missing some of my apparel, seized the remainder for rent, and led me to the door.

me so much reputation, that I was trusted to make up a head of some value, one of my fellow-lodgers stole the lace, and I was obliged to fly from a prosecution.

Thus driven again into the streets, I lived upon the least that could support me, and at night accommodated myself under pent-houses as well as I could. At length I became absolutely pennyless, and, having strolled all day without sustenance, was, at the close of evening, accosted by an elderly man, with an invitation to a tavern. I refused him with hesitation; he seized me by the hand, and drew me into a neighbouring house, where, when he saw my face pale with hunger, and my eyes swelling with tears, he spurned me from him, and bade me cant and whine in some other place; he for his part would take care of his pockets.

I still continued to stand in the way, having scarcely strength to walk further, when another soon addressed me in the same manner. When he saw the same tokens of calamity, he considered that I might be obtained at a cheap rate, and therefore quickly made overtures, which I had no longer the firmness to reject. By this man I was maintained four months in penurious wickedness, and then abandoned to my former condition, from which I was delivered by another keeper.

In this abject state I have now passed four years, the drudge of extortion and the sport of drunkenness; sometimes the property of one man, and sometimes the common prey of accidental lewdness; at one time tricked up for sale by the mistress of a brothel, at another begging in the streets to be relieved from hunger by wickedness; without any hope in the day but of finding some whom folly or excess may expose to my allurements, and without any reflections at night, but such as guilt and terrour impress upon me.

If those who pass their days in plenty and security, could visit for an hour the dismal receptacles to which the prostitute retires from her nocturnal excursions, and see the wretches that lie crowded together, mad with intemperance, ghastly with famine, nauseous with filth, and noisome with disease; it would not be easy for any degree of abhorrence to harden them against compassion, or to repress the desire which they must immediately feel to rescue such numbers of human beings from a state so dreadful.

It is said, that in France they annually evacuate their streets, and ship their prostitutes and vagabonds to their colonies. If the women that infest this city had the same opportunity of escaping from their miseries, I believe very little force would be necessary; for who among them can

dread any change? Many of us indeed are wholly unqualified for any but the most servile employments, and those perhaps would require the care of a magistrate to hinder them from following the same practices in another country; but others are only precluded by infamy from reformation, and would gladly be delivered on any terms from the necessity of guilt, and the tyranny of chance. No place but a populous city can afford opportunities for open prostitution, and where the eye of justice can attend to individuals, those who cannot be made good may be restrained from mischief. For my part, I should exult at the privilege of banishment, and think myself happy in any region that should restore me once again to honesty and peace.

I am, sir, &c.

MISELLA.

No. 172. SATURDAY, November 9, 1751.

Sæpe rogare soles qualis sim, Prisce, futurus
Si fiam locuples; simque repente potens.
Quemquam posse putas mores narrare futuros?
Dic mihi, si fias tu leo, qualis eris. MART.

Priscus, you've often ask'd me how I'd live,
Should fate at once both wealth and honour give.

gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and excess?

Yet I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly not uncommon, yet approaches not so nearly to universality, as some have asserted in the bitterness of resentment, or heat of declamation.

Whoever rises above those who once pleased themselves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain sooner than others that which all pursue with the same ardour, and to which all imagine themselves entitled, will for ever be a crime. When those who started with us in the race of life, leave us so far behind that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our disappointment by remarks on the arts of supplantation by which they gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they possess it. Of them whose rise we could not hinder, we solace ourselves by prognosticating the fall.

It is impossible for human purity not to betray to an eye, thus sharpened by malignity, some stains which lay concealed and unregarded, while none thought it their interest to discover them; nor can the most circumspect attention, or steady rectitude, escape blame from censors who have no inclination to approve. Riches therefore, perhaps, do not so often produce crimes as incite accusers.

The common charge against those who rise above their original condition, is that of pride. It is certain that success naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendship, and a thousand causes, which concur in every event without human contrivance or interposition, the part which they may justly claim in advancement. We rate ourselves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But captiousness and jealousy are likewise easily offended, and to him who studiously looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will supply it; freedom will be rudeness, and reserve sullenness; mirth will be negligence, and seriousness formality; when he is received with ceremony, distance and respect are inculcated; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himself insulted by condescensions.

It must however be confessed, that as all sudden changes are dangerous, a quick transition from poverty to abundance can seldom be made with safety. He that has long lived within sight of pleasures which he could not reach, will need

more than common moderation, not to lose his reason in unbounded riot, when they are first put into his power.

Every possession is endeared by novelty; every gratification is exaggerated by desire. It is difficult not to estimate what is lately gained above its real value; it is impossible not to annex greater happiness to that condition from which we are unwillingly excluded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reason, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune may be generally distinguished from those who are enriched in the common course of lineal descent, by his greater haste to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dress, the pomp of his equipage, the splendour of his furniture, and the luxury of his table.

A thousand things which familiarity discovers to be of little value, have power for a time to seize the imagination. A Virginian king, when the Europeans had fixed a lock on his door, was so delighted to find his subjects admitted or excluded with such facility, that it was from morning to evening his whole employment to turn the key. We, among whom locks and keys have been longer in use, are inclined to laugh at this American amusement: yet I doubt whether this paper will have a single reader that may not apply the story to himself, and recollect some hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the transitory charms of trifling novelty.

Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has suddenly transported into new regions, where unaccustomed lustre dazzles his eyes, and untasted delicacies solicit his appetite. Let him not be considered as lost in hopeless degeneracy, though he for a while forgets the regard due to others, to indulge the contemplation of himself, and in the extravagance of his first raptures expects that his eye should regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as decisive and oraculous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madness of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the sense of his insufficiency will soon return; he will remember that the co-operation of others is necessary to his happiness, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at least, one consideration which ought to alleviate our censures of the powerful and rich. To imagine them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions, is to be very little acquainted with the world.

De l' absolu pouvoir vous ignorez l'ivresse
Et du lache flateur la voix enchanteresse.

Thou hast not known the giddy whirls of fate,
Nor servile flatteries which enchant the great. Miss A. W.

He that can do much good or harm, will not find many whom ambition or cowardice will suffer to be sincere. While we live upon the level with the rest of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends and reproaches of enemies; but men who stand in the highest ranks of society, seldom hear of their faults; if by any accident an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears, flattery is always at hand to pour in her opiates, to quiet conviction, and obtund remorse.

Favour is seldom gained but by conformity in vice. Virtue can stand without assistance, and considers herself as very little obliged by countenance aud approbation: but vice, spiritless and timorous, seeks the shelter of crowds, and support of confederacy. The sycophant, therefore, neglects the good qualities of his patron, and employs all his art on his weaknesses and follies, regales his reigning vanity, or stimulates his prevalent desire.

Virtue is sufficiently difficult with any circumstances, but the difficulty is increased when reproof and advice are frighted away. In common life, reason and conscience have only the appetites and passions to encounter; but in higher stations they must oppose artifice and adulation. He, therefore, that yields to such temptations, cannot give those who look upon his miscarriage much reason for exultation, since few can justly presume that from the same snare they should have been able to escape.

No. 173. Tuesday, November 12, 1751.

Quo virtus, quo ferat error? Hor.

Now say, where virtue stops, and vice begins?

As any action or posture, long continued, will distort and disfigure the limbs; so the mind likewise is crippled and contracted by perpetual application to the same set of ideas. It is easy to guess the trade of an artisan by his knees, his fingers, or his shoulders: and there are few among men of the more liberal professions, whose minds do not carry the brand of their calling, or whose conversation does not quickly discover to what class of the community they belong.

These peculiarities have been of great use, in the general hostility which every part of mankind exercises against the rest, to furnish insults and sarcasms. Every art has its dialect, uncouth and ungrateful to all whom custom has not reconciled to its sound, and which therefore becomes ridiculous by a slight misapplication, or unnecessary repetition.

The general reproach with which ignorance revenges the superciliousness of learning, is that of pedantry; a censure which every man incurs, who has at any time the misfortune to talk to those who cannot understand him, and by which the modest and timorous are sometimes frighted from the display of their acquisitions, and the exertion of their powers.

The name of a pedant is so formidable to young men when they first sally from their colleges, and is so liberally scattered by those who mean to boast their elegance of education, easiness of manners, and knowledge of the world, that it seems to require particular consideration; since, perhaps, if it were once understood, many a heart might be freed from painful apprehensions, and many a tongue delivered from restraint.

Pedantry is the unseasonable ostentation of learning. It may be discovered either in the choice of a subject, or in the manner of treating it. He is undoubtedly guilty of pedantry, who, when he has made himself master of some abtruse and uncultivated part of knowledge, obtrudes his remarks and discoveries upon those whom he believes unable to judge of his proficiency, and from whom, as he cannot fear contradiction, he cannot properly expect applause.

To this errour the student is sometimes betrayed by the natural recurrence of the mind to its common employment, by the pleasure which every man receives from the recollection of pleasing images, and the desire of dwelling upon topics on which he knows himself able to speak with justness. But because we are seldom so far prejudiced in favour of each other, as to search out for palliations, this failure of politeness is imputed always to vanity; and the harmless collegiate, who, perhaps, intended entertainment and instruction, or at worst only spoke without sufficient reflection upon the character of his hearers, is censured as arrogant or overbearing, and eager to extend his renown, in contempt of the convenience of society, and the laws of conversation.

All discourse of which others can partake, is not only an irksome usurpation of the time devoted to pleasure and entertainment, but, what never fails to excite very keen resentment, an insolent assertion of superiority, and a triumph over less enlightened understandings. The pedant is, therefore, not only heard with weariness, but malignity; and those who

conceive themselves insulted by his knowledge, never fail to tell with acrimony how injudiciously it was exerted.

To avoid this dangerous imputation, scholars sometimes divest themselves with too much haste of their academical formality, and, in their endeavours to accommodate their notions and their style to common conceptions, talk rather of any thing than of that which they understand, and sink into insipidity of sentiment and meanness of expression.

There prevails among men of letters an opinion, that all appearance of science is particularly hateful to women; and that therefore, whoever desires to be well received in female assemblies, must qualify himself by a total rejection of all that is serious, rational, or important; must consider argument or criticism as perpetually interdicted; and devote all his attention to trifles, and all his eloquence to compliment.

Students often form their notions of the present generation from the writings of the past, and are not very early informed of those changes which the gradual diffusion of knowledge, or the sudden caprice of fashion, produces in the world. Whatever might be the state of female literature in the last century, there is now no longer any danger lest the scholar should want an adequate audience at the tea-table: and whoever thinks it necessary to regulate his conversation by antiquated rules, will be rather despised for his futility than caressed for his politeness.

To talk intentionally in a manner above the comprehension of those whom we address, is unquestionable pedantry; but surely complaisance requires, that no man should, without proof, conclude his company incapable of following him to the highest elevation of his fancy, or the utmost extent of his knowledge. It is always safer to err in favour of others than of ourselves, and therefore we seldom hazard much by endeavouring to excel.

It ought at least to be the care of learning, when she quits her exaltation, to descend with dignity. Nothing is more despicable than the airiness and jocularity of a man bred to severe science and solitary meditation. To trifle agreeably is a secret which schools cannot impart; that gay negligence and vivacious levity, which charm down resistance wherever they appear, are never attainable by him who, having spent his first years among the dust of libraries, enters late into the gay world with an unpliant attention and established habits.

It is observed in the panegyric on Fabricius, the mechanist, that, though forced by public employments into mingled conversation, he never lost the modesty and seriousness of the

convent, nor drew ridicule upon himself by an affected imitation of fashionable life. To the same praise every man devoted to learning ought to aspire. If he attempts the softer arts of pleasing, and endeavours to learn the graceful bow and the familiar embrace, the insinuating accent and the general smile, he will lose the respect due to the character of learning, without arriving at the envied honour of doing any thing with elegance and facility.

Theophrastus was discovered not to be a native of Athens, by so strict an adherence to the Attic dialect, as showed that he had learned it not by custom, but by rule. A man not early formed to habitual elegance, betrays in like manner the effects of his education, by an unnecessary anxiety of behaviour. It is as possible to become pedantic by fear of pedantry, as to be troublesome by ill-timed civility. There is no kind of impertinence more justly censurable, than his who is always labouring to level thoughts to intellects higher than his own; who apologizes for every word which his own narrowness of converse inclines him to think unusual; keeps the exuberance of his faculties under visible restraint; is solicitous to anticipate inquiries by needless explanations; and endeavours to shade his own abilities, lest weak eyes should be dazzled with their lustre.

No. 174. Saturday, November 15, 1751.

Fœnum habet in cornu; longe fuge; dummodo risum
Excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico. Hor.

Yonder he drives—avoid that furious beast:
If he may have his jest, he never cares
At whose expense; nor friend nor patron spares. Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Mr. Rambler—The laws of social benevolence require, that every man should endeavour to assist others by his experience. He that has at last escaped into port from the fluctuations of chance, and the gusts of opposition, ought to make some improvements in the chart of life, by marking the rocks on which he has been dashed, and the shallows where he had been stranded.

The errour into which I was betrayed, when custom first gave me up to my own direction, is very frequently incident to the quick, the sprightly, the fearless, and the gay; to all

whose ardour hurries them into precipitate execution of their designs, and imprudent declaration of their opinions; who seldom count the cost of pleasure, or examine the distant consequences of any practice that flatters them with immediate gratification.

I came forth into the crowded world with the usual juvenile ambition, and desired nothing beyond the title of a wit. Money I considered as below my care; for I saw such multitudes grow rich without understanding, that I could not forbear to look on wealth as an acquisition easy to industry directed by genius, and therefore threw it aside as a secondary convenience, to be procured when my principal wish should be satisfied, and the claim to intellectual excellence universally acknowledged.

With this view I regulated my behaviour in public, and exercised my meditations in solitude. My life was divided between the care of providing topics for the entertainment of my company, and that of collecting company worthy to be entertained; for I soon found, that wit, like every other power, has its boundaries: that its success depends upon the aptitude of others to receive impressions; and that as some bodies, indissoluble by heat, can set the furnace and crucible at defiance, there are minds upon which the rays of fancy may be pointed without effect, and which no fire of sentiment can agitate ar exalt.

It was, however, not long before I fitted myself with a set of companions who knew how to laugh, and to whom no other recommendation was necessary than the power of striking out a jest. Among those I fixed my residence, and for a time enjoyed the felicity of disturbing the neighbours every night with the obstreperous applause which my sallies forced from the audience. The reputation of our club every day increased, and as my flights and remarks were circulated by my admirers, every day brought new solicitations for admission into our society.

To support this perpetual fund of merriment, I frequented every place of concourse, cultivated the acquaintance of all the fashionable race, and passed the day in a continual succession of visits, in which I collected a treasure of pleasantry for the expenses of the evening. Whatever errour of conduct I could discover, whatever peculiarity of manner I could observe, whatever weakness was betrayed by confidence, whatever lapse was suffered by neglect, all was drawn together for the diversion of my wild companions, who, when they had been taught the art of ridicule, never failed to signalize themselves by a zealous imitation, and filled the town on the

ensuing day with scandal and vexation, with merriment and shame.

I can scarcely believe, when I recollect my own practice, that I could have been so far deluded with petty praise, as to divulge the secrets of trust, and to expose the levities of frankness; to waylay the walks of the cautious, and surprise the security of the thoughtless. Yet it is certain, that for many years I heard nothing but with design to tell it, and saw nothing with any other curiosity than after some failure that might furnish out a jest.

My heart, indeed, acquits me of deliberate malignity, or interested insidiousness. I had no other purpose than to heighten the pleasure of laughter by communication, nor ever raised any pecuniary advantage from the calamities of others. I led weakness and negligence into difficulties, only that I might divert myself with their perplexities and distresses; and violated every law of friendship, with no other hope than that of gaining the reputation of smartness and waggery.

I would not be understood to charge myself with any crimes of the atrocious or destructive kind. I never betrayed an heir to gamesters, or a girl to debauchees; never intercepted the kindness of a patron, or sported away the reputation of innocence. My delight was only in petty mischief and momentary vexations, and my acuteness was employed not upon fraud and oppression, which it had been meritorious to detect, but upon harmless ignorance or absurdity, prejudice or mistake.

This inquiry I pursued with so much diligence and sagacity, that I was able to relate, of every man whom I knew, some blunder or miscarriage; to betray the most circumspect of my friends into follies, by a judicious flattery of his predominant passion; or expose him to contempt, by placing him in circumstances which put his prejudices into action, brought to view his natural defects, or drew the attention of the company on his airs of affectation.

The power had been possessed in vain if it had never been exerted; and it was not my custom to let any arts of jocularity remain unemployed. My impatience of applause brought me always early to the place of entertainment; and I seldom failed to lay a scheme with the small knot that first gathered round me, by which some of those whom we expected might be made subservient to our sport. Every man has some favourite topic of conversation, on which, by a feigned seriousness of attention, he may be drawn to expatiate without end. Every man has some habitual contortion of body, or

established mode of expression, which never fails to raise mirth if it be pointed out to notice. By premonitions of these particularities I secured our pleasantry. Our companion entered with his usual gaiety, and began to partake of our noisy cheerfulness, when the conversation was imperceptibly diverted to a subject which pressed upon his tender part, and extorted the expected shrug, the customary exclamation, or the predicted remark. A general clamour of joy then burst from all that were admitted to the stratagem. Our mirth was often increased by the triumph of him that occasioned it; for as we do not hastily form conclusions against ourselves, seldom any one suspected that he had exhilarated us otherwise than by his wit.

You will hear, I believe, with very little surprise, that by this conduct I had in a short time united mankind against me, and that every tongue was diligent in prevention or revenge. I soon perceived myself regarded with malevolence or distrust, but wondered what had been discovered in me either terrible or hateful. I had invaded no man's property; I had rivalled no man's claims; nor had ever engaged in any of those attempts which provoke the jealousy of ambition or the rage of faction. I had lived but to laugh, and make others laugh; and believed that I was loved by all who caressed, and favoured by all who applauded me. I never imagined, that he who in the mirth of a nocturnal revel, concurred in ridiculing his friend, would consider, in a cooler hour, that the same trick might be played against himself; or that, even where there is no sense of danger, the natural pride of human nature rises against him, who, by general censures, lays claim to general superiority.

I was convinced, by a total desertion, of the impropriety of my conduct; every man avoided, and cautioned others to avoid me. Wherever I came, I found silence and dejection, coldness and terrour. No one wonld venture to speak, lest he should lay himself open to unfavourable representations; the company, however numerous, dropped off at my entrance, upon various pretences; and, if I retired to avoid the shame of being left, I heard confidence and mirth revive at my departure.

If those whom I had thus offended could have contented themselves with repaying one insult for another, and kept up the war only by a reciprocation of sarcasms, they might have perhaps vexed, but would never much have hurt me; for no man heartily hates him at whom he can laugh. But these wounds which they give me as they fly, are without cure; this alarm which they spread by their solicitude to escape

me, excludes me from all friendship and from all pleasure. I am condemned to pass a long interval of my life in solitude, as a man suspected of infection is refused admission into cities; and must linger in obsurity, till my conduct shall convince the world, that I may be approached without hazard.

I am, &c.
DICACULUS.

No. 175. TUESDAY, November 19, 1751.

Rari quippe boni, numero vix sunt totidem quot
Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili. JUV.

Good men are scarce, the just are thinly sown;
They thrive but ill, nor can they last when grown.
And should we count them, and our store compile,
Yet Thebus more gates could show, more mouths the Nile.
CREECH.

NONE of the axioms of wisdom which recommend the ancient sages to veneration, seems to have required less extent of knowledge or perspicacity of penetration, than the remark of Bias, that οἱ πλείονες κακοί, *the majority are wicked.*

The depravity of mankind is so easily discoverable, that nothing but the desert or the cell can exclude it from notice. The knowledge of crimes intrudes uncalled and undesired. They whom their abstraction from common occurrences hinders from seeing iniquity, will quickly have their attention awakened by feeling it. Even he who ventures not into the world, may learn its corruption in his closet. For what are treatises of morality, but persuasives to the practice of duties, for which no arguments would be necessary, but that we are continually tempted to violate or neglect them? What are all the records of history, but narratives of successive villanies, of treasons and usurpations, massacres and wars?

But, perhaps, the excellence of aphorisms consists not so much in the expression of some rare or abstruse sentiment, as in the comprehension of some obvious and useful truth in a few words. We frequently fall into errour and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because, for a time, they are not remembered; and he may therefore be justly numbered among the benefactors of mankind, who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences.

that may be easily impressed on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habitually to the mind.

However those who have passed through half the life of man, may now wonder that any should require to be cautioned against corruption, they will find, that they have themselves purchased their conviction by many disappointments and vexations, which an earlier knowledge would have spared them; and may see, on every side, some entangling themselves in perplexities, and some sinking into ruin, by ignorance or neglect of the maxim of Bias.

Every day sends out, in quest of pleasure and distinction, some heir fondled in ignorance, and flattered into pride. He comes forth with all the confidence of a spirit unacquainted with superiors, and all the benevolence of a mind not yet irritated by opposition, alarmed by fraud, or embittered by cruelty. He loves all, because he imagines himself the universal favourite. Every exchange of salutation produces new acquaintance, and every acquaintance kindles into friendship.

Every season brings a new flight of beauties into the world, who have hitherto heard only of their own charms, and imagine that the heart feels no passion but that of love. They are soon surrounded by admirers whom they credit, because they tell them only what is heard with delight. Whoever gazes upon them is a lover; and whoever forces a sigh, is pining in despair.

He surely is a useful monitor, who inculcates to these thoughtless strangers, that the *majority are wicked;* who informs them, that the train which wealth and beauty draw after them is lured only by the scent of prey; and that, perhaps, among all these who crowd about them with professions and flatteries, there is not one who does not hope for some opportunity to devour or betray them, to glut himself by their destruction, or to share their spoils with a stronger savage.

Virtue, presented singly to the imagination or the reason, is so well recommended by its own graces, and so strongly supported by arguments, that a good man wonders how any can be bad; and they who are ignorant of the force of passion and interest, who never observed the arts of seduction, the contagion of example, the gradual descent from one crime to another, or the insensible depravation of the principles by loose conversation, naturally expect to find integrity in every bosom, and veracity on every tongue.

It is, indeed, impossible not to hear from those who have lived longer, of wrongs and falsehoods, of violence and cir-

cumvention; but such narratives are commonly regarded by the young, the heady, and the confident, as nothing more than the murmurs of peevishness, or the dreams of dotage; and, notwithstanding all the documents of hoary wisdom, we commonly plunge into the world fearless and credulous, without any foresight of danger, or apprehension of deceit.

I have remarked, in a former paper, that credulity is the common failing of unexperienced virtue; and that he who is spontaneously suspicious, may be justly charged with radical corruption: for, if he has not known the prevalence of dishonesty by information, nor had time to observe it with his own eyes, whence can he take his measures of judgment but from himself?

They who best deserve to escape the snares of artifice, are most likely to be entangled. He that endeavours to live for the good of others, must always be exposed to the arts of them who live only for themselves, unless he is taught by timely precepts the caution required in common transactions, and shown at a distance the pitfalls of treachery.

To youth, therefore, it should be carefully inculcated, that, to enter the road of life without caution or reserve, in expectation of general fidelity and justice, is to launch on the wide ocean without the instruments of steerage, and to hope that every wind will be prosperous, and that every coast will afford a harbour.

To enumerate the various motives to deceit and injury, would be to count all the desires that prevail among the sons of men; since there is no ambition however petty, no wish however absurd, that by indulgence will not be enabled to overpower the influence of virtue. Many there are, who openly and almost professedly regulate all their conduct by their love of money; who have no other reason for action or forbearance, for compliance or refusal, than that they hope to gain more by one than by the other. These are indeed the meanest and cruelest of human beings, a race with whom, as with some pestiferous animals, the whole creation seems to be at war; but who, however detested or scorned, long continue to add heap to heap, and, when they have reduced one to beggary, are still permitted to fasten on another.

Others, yet less rationally wicked, pass their lives in mischief, because they cannot bear the sight of success, and mark out every man for hatred, whose fame or fortune they believe increasing.

Many, who have not advanced to these degrees of guilt, are yet wholly unqualified for friendship, and unable to maintain any constant or regular course of kindness. Happiness may

be destroyed not only by union with the man who is apparently the slave of interest, but with him whom a wild opinion of the dignity of perseverance, in whatever cause, disposes to pursue every injury with unwearied and perpetual resentment; with him whose vanity inclines him to consider every man as a rival in every pretension; with him whose airy negligence puts his friend's affairs or secrets in continual hazard, and who thinks his forgetfulness of others excused by his inattention to himself; and with him whose inconstancy ranges without any settled rule of choice through varieties of friendship, and who adopts and dismisses favourites by the sudden impulse of caprice.

Thus numerous are the dangers to which the converse of mankind exposes us, and which can be avoided only by prudent distrust. He therefore that, remembering this salutary maxim, learns early to withhold his fondness from fair appearances, will have reason to pay some honours to Bias of Priene, who enabled him to become wise without the cost of experience.

No. 176. Saturday, November 23, 1751.

——*Naso suspendere adunco.* Hor.

On me you turn the nose.——

There are many vexatious accidents and uneasy situations which raise little compassion for the sufferer, and which no man but those whom they immediately distress can regard with seriousness. Petty mischiefs, that have no influence on futurity, nor extend their effects to the rest of life, are always seen with a kind of malicious pleasure. A mistake or embarrassment, which for the present moment fills the face with blushes, and the mind with confusion, will have no other effect upon those who observe it, than that of convulsing them with irresistible laughter. Some circumstances of misery are so powerfully ridiculous, that neither kindness nor duty can withstand them; they bear down love, interest, and reverence, and force the friend, the dependent, or the child, to give way to instantaneous motions of merriment.

Among the principal of comic calamities, may be reckoned the pain which an author, not yet hardened into insensibility, feels at the onset of a furious critic, whose age, rank, or fortune, gives him confidence to speak without reserve; who

heaps one objection upon another, and obtrudes his remarks, and enforces his corrections, without tenderness or awe.

The author, full of the importance of his work, and anxious for the justification of every syllable, starts and kindles at the slightest attack; the critic, eager to establish his superiority triumphing in every discovery of failure, and zealous to impress the cogency of his arguments, pursues him from line to line without cessation or remorse. The critic, who hazards little, proceeds with vehemence, impetuosity, and fearlessness; the author, whose quiet and fame, and life and immortality, are involved in the controversy, tries every art of subterfuge and defence; maintains modestly what he resolves never to yield, and yields unwillingly what cannot be maintained. The critic's purpose is to conquer, the author only hopes to escape; the critic therefore knits his brow, and raises his voice, and rejoices whenever he perceives any tokens of pain excited by the pressure of his assertions, or the point of his sarcasms. The author, whose endeavour is at once to mollify and elude his persecuter, composes his features and softens his accent, breaks the force of assault by retreat, and rather steps aside than flies or advances.

As it very seldom happens that the rage of extemporary criticism inflicts fatal or lasting wounds, I know not that the laws of benevolence entitle this distress to much sympathy. The diversion of baiting an author has the sanction of all ages and nations, and is more lawful than the sport of teasing other animals, because, for the most part, he comes voluntarily to the stake, furnished, as he imagines, by the patron powers of literature, with resistless weapons and impenetrable armour, with the mail of the boar of Erymanth, and the paws of the lion of Nemea.

But the works of genius are sometimes produced by other motives than vanity; and he whom necessity or duty enforces to write, is not always so well satisfied with himself, as not to be discouraged by censorious impudence. It may therefore be necessary to consider how they whom publication lays open to the insults of such as their obscurity secures against reprisals, may extricate themselves from unexpected encounters.

Vida, a man of considerable skill in the politics of literature, directs his pupil wholly to abandon his defence, and, even when he can irrefragably refute all objections, to suffer tamely the exultations of his antagonist.

This rule may perhaps be just, when advice is asked, and severity solicited, because no man tells his opinion so freely as when he imagines it received with implicit veneration; and critics ought never be consulted, but while errours may yet be

rectified or insipidity suppressed. But when the book has once been dismissed into the world, and can be no more retouched, I know not whether a very different conduct should not be prescribed, and whether firmness and spirit may not sometimes be of use to overpower arrogance and repel brutality. Softness, diffidence, and moderation, will often be mistaken for imbecility and dejection; they allure cowardice to the attack by the hopes of easy victory, and it will soon be found that he whom every man thinks he can conquer, shall never be at peace.

The animadversions of critics are commonly such as may easily provoke the sedatest writer to some quickness of resentment and asperity of reply. A man who by long consideration has familiarised a subject to his own mind, carefully surveyed the series of his thoughts, and planned all the parts of his composition into a regular dependence on each other, will often start at the sinistrous interpretations or absurd remarks of haste and ignorance, and wonder by what infatuation they have been led away from the obvious sense, and upon what peculiar principles of judgment they decide against him.

The eye of the intellect, like that of the body, is not equally perfect in all, nor equally adapted in any to all objects; the end of criticism is to supply its defects; rules are the instruments of mental vision, which may indeed assist our faculties when properly used, but produce confusion and obscurity by unskilful application.

Some seem always to read with the microscope of criticism, and employ their whole attention upon minute elegance, or faults scarcely visible to common observation. The dissonance of a syllable, the recurrence of the same sound, the repetition of a particle, the smallest deviation from propriety, the slightest defect in construction or arrangement, swell before their eyes into enormities. As they discern with great exactness, they comprehend but a narrow compass, and know nothing of the justness of the design, the general spirit of the performance, the artifice of connexion, or the harmony of the parts; they never conceive how small a proportion that which they are busy in contemplating bears to the whole, or how the petty inaccuracies with which they are offended, are absorbed and lost in general excellence.

Others are furnished by criticism with a telescope. They see with great clearness whatever is too remote to be discovered by the rest of mankind, but are totally blind to all that lies immediately before them. They discover in every passage some secret meaning, some remote allusion, some artful

allegory, or some occult imitation, which no other reader ever suspected; but they have no perception of the cogency of arguments, the force of pathetic sentiments, the various colours of diction, or the flowery embellishments of fancy; of all that engages the attention of others they are totally insensible, while they pry into worlds of conjecture, and amuse themselves with phantoms in the clouds.

In criticism, as in every other art, we fail sometimes by our weakness, but more frequently by our fault. We are sometimes bewildered by ignorance, and sometimes by prejudice; but we seldom deviate far from the right, but when we deliver ourselves up to the direction of vanity.

No. 177. Tuesday, November 26, 1751.

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas. Mart.

Those things which now seem frivolous and slight
Will be of serious consequence to you
When they have made you once ridiculous. Roscommon.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—When I was, at the usual time, about to enter upon the profession to which my friends had destined me, being summoned, by the death of my father, into the country, I found myself master of an unexpected sum of money, and of an estate, which, though not large, was, in my opinion, sufficient to support me in a condition far preferable to the fatigue, dependence, and uncertainty of any gainful occupation. I therefore resolved to devote the rest of my life wholly to curiosity, and without any confinement of my excursions, or termination of my views, to wander over the boundless regions of general knowledge.

This scheme of life seemed pregnant with inexhaustible variety, and therefore I could not forbear to congratulate myself upon the wisdom of my choice. I furnished a large room with all conveniences for study; collected books of every kind; quitted every science at the first perception of disgust; returned to it again as soon as my former ardour happened to revive; and having no rival to depress me by comparison, nor any critic to alarm me with objections, I spent day after day in profound tranquillity, with only so much complacence in my own improvements, as served to excite and animate my application.

Thus I lived for some years with complete acquiescence in my own plan of conduct, rising early to read, and dividing the latter part of the day between economy, exercise and reflection. But in time I began to find my mind contracted and stiffened by solitude. My ease and elegance were sensibly impaired; I was no longer able to accommodate myself with readiness to the accidental current of conversation; my notions grew particular and paradoxical, and my phraseology formal and unfashionable; I spoke, on common occasions, the language of books. My quickness of apprehension and celerity of reply, had entirely deserted me; when I delivered my opinion or detailed my knowledge, I was bewildered by an unseasonable interrogatory, disconcerted by any slight opposition, and overwhelmed and lost in dejection, when the smallest advantage was gained against me in dispute. I became decisive and dogmatical, impatient of contradiction, perpetually jealous of my character, insolent to such as acknowledged my superiority, and sullen and malignant to all who refused to receive my dictates.

This I soon discovered to be one of those intellectual diseases which a wise man should make haste to cure, I therefore resolved for a time to shut my books, and learn again the art of conversation; to defecate and clear my mind by brisker motions and stronger impulses; and to unite myself once more to the living generation.

For this purpose I hasted to London, and entreated one of my academical acquaintances, to introduce me into some of the little societies of literature which are formed in taverns and coffee-houses. He was pleased with an opportunity of showing me to his friends, and soon obtained me admission among a select company of curious men, who met once a week to exhilarate their studies and compare their acquisitions.

The eldest and most venerable of this society was Hirsutus, who, after the first civilities of my reception, found means to introduce the mention of his favourite studies, by a severe censure of those who want the due regard for their native country. He informed me that he had early withdrawn his attention from foreign trifles, and that, since he began to addict his mind to serious and manly studies, he had very carefully amassed all the English books that were printed in the black character. This search he had pursued so diligently, that he was able to show the deficiencies of the best catalogues. He had long since completed his Caxton, had three sheets of Treveris unknown to the antiquaries, and wanted to a perfect Pynson but two volumes, of which one was promised him as a

legacy by its present possessor, and the other he was resolved to buy, at whatever price, when Quisquilius's library should be sold. Hirsutus had no other reason for valuing or slighting a book, than that it was printed in the Roman or the Gothic letter, nor any ideas but such as his favourite volumes had supplied; when he was serious, he expatiated on the narratives of Johan de Trevisa, and, when he was merry, regaled us with a quotation from the Shippe of Foles.

While I was listening to this hoary student, Ferratus entered in a hurry, and informed us with the abruptness of ecstacy, that his set of halfpence was now complete; he had just received in a handful of change the piece that he had so long been seeking, and could now defy mankind to outgo his collection of English copper.

Chartophylax then observed how fatally human sagacity was sometimes baffled, and how often the most valuable discoveries are made by chance. He had employed himself and his emissaries seven years at great expense to perfect his series of Gazettes, but had long wanted a single paper, which, when he despaired of obtaining it, was sent him wrapped round a parcel of tobacco.

Cantilenus turned all his thoughts upon old ballads, for he considered them as the genuine records of the national taste. He offered to show me a copy of The Children in the Wood, which he firmly believed to be of the first edition, and by the help of which the text might be freed from several corruptions, if this age of barbarism had any claim to such favours from him.

Many were admitted into this society as inferiour members, because they had collected old prints and neglected pamphlets, or possessed some fragment of antiquity, as the seal of an ancient corporation, the charter of a religious house, the genealogy of a family extinct, or a letter written in the reign of Elizabeth.

Every one of these virtuosoes looked on all his associates as wretches of depraved taste and narrow notions. Their conversation was, therefore, fretful and waspish, their behaviour brutal, their merriment bluntly sarcastic, and their seriousness gloomy and suspicious. They were totally ignorant of all that passes, or has lately passed, in the world; unable to discuss any question of religious, political, or military knowledge; equally strangers to science and politer learning; and without any wish to improve their minds, or any other pleasure than that of displaying rarities of which they would not suffer others to make the proper use.

Hirsutus graciously informed me, that the number of their

society was limited, but that I might sometimes attend as an auditor. I was pleased to find myself in no danger of an honour which I could not have willingly accepted, nor gracefully refused, and left them without any intention of returning; for I soon found that the suppression of those habits with which I was vitiated, required association with men very different from this solemn race.

I am, Sir, &c.

VIVACULUS.

It is natural to feel grief or indignation, when any thing necessary or useful is wantonly wasted, or negligently destroyed; and therefore my correspondent cannot be blamed for looking with uneasiness on the waste of life. Leisure and curiosity might soon make great advances in useful knowledge, were they not diverted by minute emulation and laborious trifles. It may, however, somewhat mollify his anger to reflect, that perhaps none of the assembly which he describes was capable of any nobler employment, and that he who does his best, however little, is always to be distinguished from him who does nothing. Whatever busies the mind without corrupting it, has at least this use, that it rescues the day from idleness, and he that is never idle will not often be vicious.

No. 178. SATURDAY, November 30, 1751.

Pars sanitatis velle sanari fuit. SENECA.

To yield to remedies is half the cure.

PYTHAGORAS is reported to have required from those whom he instructed in philosophy a probationary silence of five years. Whether this prohibition of speech extended to all the parts of this time, as seems generally to be supposed, or was to be observed only in the school or in the presence of their master, as is more probable, it was sufficient to discover the pupil's disposition; to try whether he was willing to pay the price of learning; or whether he was one of those whose ardour was rather violent than lasting, and who expected

to grow wise on other terms than those of patience and obedience.

Many of the blessings universally desired, are very frequently wanted, because most men, when they should labour, content themselves to complain, and rather linger in a state in which they cannot be at rest, than improve their condition by vigour and resolution.

Providence has fixed the limits of human enjoyment by immovable boundaries, and has set different gratifications at such a distance from each other, that no art or power can bring them together. This great law it is the business of every rational being to understand, that life may not pass away in an attempt to make contradictions consistent, to combine opposite qualities, and to unite things which the nature of their being must always keep asunder.

Of two objects tempting at a distance on contrary sides, it is impossible to approach one but by receding from the other; by long deliberation and dilatory projects, they may be both lost, but can never be both gained. It is, therefore, necessary to compare them, and, when we have determined the preference, to withdraw our eyes and our thoughts at once from that which reason directs us to reject. This is more necessary, if that which we are forsaking has the power of delighting the senses, or firing the fancy. He that once turns aside to the allurements of unlawful pleasure can have no security that he shall ever regain the paths of virtue.

The philosophic goddess of Boethius, having related the story of Orpheus, who, when he had recovered his wife from the dominions of death, lost her again by looking back upon her in the confines of light, concludes with a very elegant and forcible application. *Whoever you are that endeavour to elevate your minds to the illuminations of Heaven, consider yourselves as represented in this fable: for he that is once so far overcome as to turn back his eyes towards the infernal caverns, loses at the first sight all that influence which attracted him on high:*

Vos hæc fabula respicit,
Quicumque in superum diem
Mentem ducere quæritis.
Nam qui Tartareum in specus
Victus lumina flexerit,
Quidquid præcipuum trahit,
Perdit, dum videt inferos.

It may be observed, in general, that the future is purchased by the present. It is not possible to secure distant or per-

manent happiness but by the forbearance of some immediate gratification. This is so evidently true with regard to the whole of our existence, that all the precepts of theology have no other tendency than to enforce a life of faith; a life regulated not by our senses but our belief: a life in which pleasures are to be refused for fear of invisible punishments, and calamities sometimes to be sought, and always endured, in hopes of rewards that shall be obtained in another state.

Even if we take into our view only that particle of our duration which is terminated by the grave, it will be found that we cannot enjoy one part of life beyond the common limitations of pleasure, but by anticipating some of the satisfaction which should exhilarate the following years. The heat of youth may spread happiness into wild luxuriance; but the radical vigour requisite to make it perennial is exhausted, and all that can be hoped afterwards is languor and sterility.

The reigning errour of mankind is, that we are not content with the conditions on which the goods of life are granted. No man is insensible of the value of knowledge, the advantages of health, or the convenience of plenty, but every day shows us those on whom the conviction is without effect.

Knowledge is praised and desired by multitudes whom her charms could never rouse from the couch of sloth; whom the faintest invitation of pleasure draws away from their studies; to whom any other method of wearing out the day is more eligible than the use of books, and who are more easily engaged by any conversation, than such as may rectify their notions or enlarge their comprehension.

Every man that has felt pain, knows how little all other comforts can gladden him to whom health is denied. Yet who is there does not sometimes hazard it for the enjoyment of an hour? All assemblies of jollity, all places of public entertainment, exhibit examples of strength wasting in riot, and beauty withering in irregularity; nor is it easy to enter a house in which part of the family is not groaning in repentance of past intemperance, and part admitting disease by negligence, or soliciting it by luxury.

There is no pleasure which men of every age and sect have more generally agreed to mention with contempt, than the gratification of the palate; an entertainment so far removed from intellectual happiness, that scarcely the most shameless of the sensual herd have dared to defend it: yet even to this, the lowest of our delights, to this, though neither quick nor lasting, is health with all its activity and sprightliness daily

sacrificed; and for this are half the miseries endured which urge impatience to call on death.

The whole world is put in motion by the wish for riches and the dread of poverty. Who then would not imagine that such conduct as will inevitably destroy what all are thus labouring to acquire, must generally be avoided? That he who spends more than he receives, must in time become indigent, cannot be doubted; but, how evident soever this consequence may appear, the spendthrift moves in the whirl of pleasure with too much rapidity to keep it before his eyes, and, in the intoxication of gaiety, grows every day poorer without any such sense of approaching ruin as is sufficient to wake him into caution.

Many complaints are made of the misery of life; and indeed it must be confessed that we are subject to calamities by which the good and bad, the diligent and slothful, the vigilant and heedless, are equally afflicted. But surely, though some indulgence may be allowed to groans extorted by inevitable misery, no man has a right to repine at evils which, against warning, against experience, he deliberately and leisurely brings upon his own head; or to consider himself as debarred from happiness by such obstacles as resolution may break or dexterity may put aside.

Great numbers who quarrel with their condition, have wanted not the power but the will to obtain a better state. They have never contemplated the difference between good and evil sufficiently to quicken aversion, or invigorate desire; they have indulged a drowsy thoughtlessness or giddy levity; have committed the balance of choice to the management of caprice; and when they have long accustomed themselves to receive all that chance offered them, without examination, lament at last that they find themselves deceived.

No. 179. Tuesday, December 3, 1751.

Perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat. Juv.

Democritus would feed his spleen, and shake
His sides and shoulders till he felt them ake. Dryden.

"Every man," says Tully, "has two characters; one which he partakes with all mankind, and by which he is distinguished from brute animals; another which discriminates him from the rest of his own species, and impresses on him

a manner and temper peculiar to himself: this particular character, if it be not repugnant to the laws of general humanity, it is always his business to cultivate and preserve."

Every hour furnishes some confirmation of Tully's precept. It seldom happens, that an assembly of pleasure is so happily selected, but that some one finds admission with whom the rest are deservedly offended; and it will appear, on a close inspection, that scarce any man becomes eminently disagreeable, but by a departure from his real character, and an attempt at something for which nature or education have left him unqualified.

Ignorance or dullness have indeed no power of affording delight, but they never give disgust except when they assume the dignity of knowledge, or ape the sprightliness of wit. Awkwardness and inelegance have none of those attractions by which ease and politeness take possession of the heart; but ridicule and censure seldom rise against them, unless they appear associated with that confidence which belongs only to long acquaintance with the modes of life, and to consciousness of unfailing propriety of behaviour. Deformity itself is regarded with tenderness rather than aversion, when it does not attempt to deceive the sight by dress and decoration, and to seize upon fictitious claims the prerogatives of beauty.

He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city; will see many passengers whose air and motion it will be difficult to behold without contempt and laughter; but if he examines what are the appearances that thus powerfully excite his risibility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful defect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of foppery, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the solemnity of grandeur; by the sprightly trip, the stately stalk, the formal strut, and the lofty mien; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks elaborately formed as evidences of importance.

It has, I think, been sometimes urged in favour of affectation, that it is only a mistake of the means to a good end, and that the intention with which it is practised is always to please. If all attempts to innovate the constitutional or habitual character have really proceeded from public spirit and love of others, the world has hitherto been sufficiently ungrateful, since no return but scorn has yet been made to the most difficult of all enterprises, a contest with nature; nor has any pity been shown to the fatigues of labour which never

succeeded, and the uneasiness of disguise by which nothing was concealed.

It seems therefore to be determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that he who decks himself in adscititious qualities rather purposes to command applause than impart pleasure; and he is therefore treated as a man who, by an unreasonable ambition, usurps the place in society to which he has no right. Praise is seldom paid with willingness even to incontestable merit, and it can be no wonder that he who calls for it without desert is repulsed with universal indignation.

Affectation naturally counterfeits those excellencies which are placed at the greatest distance from possibility of attainment. We are conscious of our own defects, and eagerly endeavour to supply them by artificial excellence; nor would such efforts be wholly without excuse, were they not often excited by ornamental trifles, which he, that thus anxiously struggles for the reputation of possessing them, would not have been known to want, had not his industry quickened observation.

Gelasimus passed the first part of his life in academical privacy and rural retirement, without any other conversation than that of scholars, grave, studious, and abstracted as himself. He cultivated the mathematical sciences with indefatigable diligence, discovered many useful theorems, discussed with great accuracy the resistance of fluids, and, though his priority was not generally acknowledged, was the first who fully explained all the properties of the catenarian curve.

Learning, when it rises to eminence, will be observed in time, whatever mists may happen to surround it. Gelasimus, in his forty-ninth year, was distinguished by those who have the rewards of knowledge in their hands, and called out to display his acquisitions for the honour of his country, and add dignity by his presence to philosophical assemblies. As he did not suspect his unfitness for common affairs, he felt no reluctance to obey the invitation, and what he did not feel he had yet too much honesty to feign. He entered into the world as a larger and more populous college, where his performances would be more public, and his renown further extended; and imagined that he should find his reputation universally prevalent, and the influence of learning every where the same.

His merit introduced him to splendid tables and elegant acquaintance; but he did not find himself always qualified to join in the conversation. He was distressed by civilities

which he knew not how to repay, and entangled in many ceremonial perplexities from which his books and diagrams could not extricate him. He was sometimes unluckily engaged in disputes with ladies, with whom algebraic axioms had no great weight; and saw many whose favour and esteem he could not but desire, to whom he was very little recommended by his theories of the tides, or his approximations to the quadrature of the circle.

Gelasimus did not want penetration to discover, that no charm was more generally irresistible than that of easy facetiousness and flowing hilarity. He saw that diversion was more frequently welcome than improvement; that authority and seriousness were rather feared than loved; and that the grave scholar was a kind of imperious ally, hastily dismissed when his assistance was no longer necessary. He came to a sudden resolution of throwing off those cumbrous ornaments of learning which hindered his reception, and commenced a man of wit and jocularity. Utterly unacquainted with every topic of merriment, ignorant of the modes and follies, the vices and virtues of mankind, and unfurnished with any ideas but such as Pappus and Archimedes had given him, he began to silence all inquiries with a jest instead of a solution; extended his face with a grin, which he mistook for a smile; and, in the place of a scientific discourse, retailed in a new language, formed between the college and the tavern, the intelligence of the newspaper.

Laughter, he knew, was a token of alacrity; and therefore, whatever he said or heard, he was careful not to fail in that great duty of a wit. If he asked or told the hour of the day, if he complained of heat or cold, stirred the fire, or filled a glass, removed his chair, or snuffed a candle, he always found some occasion to laugh. The jest was indeed a secret to all but himself; but habitual confidence in his own discernment hindered him from suspecting any weakness or mistake. He wondered that his wit was so little understood, but expected that his audience would comprehend it by degrees, and persisted all his life to show by gross buffoonery, how little the strongest faculties can perform beyond the limits of their own province.

No. 180. Saturday, December 7, 1751.

Ταῦτ εἰδὼς σοφὸς ἴσθι, μάτην δ' Ἐπίκουρον ἴασον
Πῦ το κενὸν ζητεῖν, καὶ τίνες αἱ μονάδες.

Automedon.

On life, on morals, be thy thoughts employ'd:
Leave to the schools their atoms and their void.

It is somewhere related by Le Clerc, that a wealthy trader of good understanding, having the common ambition to breed his son a scholar, carried him to an university, resolving to use his own judgment in the choice of a tutor. He had been taught, by whatever intelligence, the nearest way to the heart of an academic, and at his arrival entertained all who came about him with such profusion, that the professors were lured by the smell of his table from their books, and flocked round him with all the cringes of awkward complaisance. This eagerness answered the merchant's purpose; he glutted them with delicacies, and softened them with caresses, till he prevailed upon one after another to open his bosom, and make a discovery of his competitions, jealousies, and resentments. Having thus learned each man's character, partly from himself, and partly from his acquaintances, he resolved to find some other education for his son, and went away convinced, that a scholastic life has no other tendency than to vitiate the morals and contract the understanding: nor would he afterwards hear with patience the praises of the ancient authors, being persuaded that scholars of all ages must have been the same, and that Xenophon and Cicero were professors of some former university, and therefore mean and selfish, ignorant and servile, like those whom he had lately visited and forsaken.

Envy, curiosity, and a sense of the imperfection of our present state, incline us to estimate the advantages which are in the possession of others above their real value. Every one must have remarked, what powers and prerogatives the vulgar imagine to be conferred by learning. A man of science is expected to excel the unlettered and unenlighted even on occasions where literature is of no use, and, among weak minds, loses part of his reverence, by discovering no superiority in those parts of life in which all are unavoidably equal; as, when a monarch makes a progress to the remoter provinces, the rustics are said sometimes to wonder that they find him of the same size with themselves.

These demands of prejudice and folly can never be satisfied; and therefore many of the imputations which learning suffers from disappointed ignorance are without reproach. But there are some failures to which men of study are peculiarly exposed. Every condition has its disadvantage. The circle of knowledge is too wide for the most active and diligent intellect, and while science is pursued, other accomplishments are neglected; as a small garrison must leave one part of an extensive fortress naked when an alarm calls them to another.

The learned, however, might generally support their dignity with more success, if they suffered not themselves to be misled by the desire of superfluous attainments. Raphael, in return to Adam's inquiries into the courses of the stars and the revolutions of heaven, counsels him to withdraw his mind from idle speculations, and employ his faculties upon nearer and more interesting objects, the survey of his own life, the subjection of his passions, the knowledge of duties which must daily be performed, and the detection of dangers which must daily be incurred.

This angelic counsel every man of letters should always have before him. He that devotes himself to retired study naturally sinks from omission to forgetfulness of social duties; he must be therefore sometimes awakened and recalled to the general condition of mankind.

I am far from any intention to limit curiosity, or confine the labours of learning to arts of immediate and necessary use. It is only from the various essays of experimental industry, and the vague excursions of minds sent out upon discovery, than any advancement of knowledge can be expected; and though many must be disappointed in their labours, yet they are not to be charged with having spent their time in vain; their example contributed to inspire emulation, and their miscarriages taught others the way to success.

But the distant hope of being one day useful or eminent, ought not to mislead us too far from that study which is equally requisite to the great and mean, to the celebrated and obscure; the art of moderating the desires, of repressing the appetites, and of conciliating or retaining the favour of mankind.

No man can imagine the course of his own life, or the conduct of the world around him, unworthy his attention; yet, among the sons of learning, many seem to have thought of every thing rather than of themselves, and to have observed every thing but what passes before their eyes: many who toil through the intricacy of complicated systems, are insuperably

embarrassed with the least perplexity in common affairs; many who compare the actions and ascertain the characters of ancient heroes, let their own days glide away without examination, and suffer vicious habits to encroach upon their minds without resistance or detection.

The most frequent reproach of the scholastic race is the want of fortitude, not martial but philosophic. Men bred in shades and silence, taught to immure themselves at sunset, and accustomed to no other weapon than syllogism, may be allowed to feel terrour at personal danger, and to be disconcerted by tumult and alarm. But why should he whose life is spent in contemplation, and whose business is only to discover truth, be unable to rectify the fallacies of imagination, or contend successfully against prejudice and passion? To what end has he read and meditated, if he gives up his understanding to false appearances, and suffers himself to be enslaved by fear of evils to which only folly or vanity can expose him, or elated by advantages to which, as they are equally conferred upon the good and bad, no real dignity is annexed?

Such, however, is the state of the world, that the most obsequious of the slaves of pride, the most rapturous of the gazers upon wealth, the most officious of the whisperers of greatness, are collected from seminaries appropriated to the study of wisdom and of virtue, where it was intended that appetite should learn to be content with little; and that hope should aspire only to honours which no human power can give or take away.

The student, when he comes forth into the world, instead of congratulating himself upon his exemption from the errours of those whose opinions have been formed by accident or custom, and who live without any certain principles of conduct, is commonly in haste to mingle with the multitude, and show his sprigtliness and ductility by an expeditious compliance with fashions or vices. The first smile of a man, whose fortune gives him power to reward his dependents, commonly enchants him beyond resistance; the glare of equipage, the sweets of luxury, the liberality of general promises, the softness of habitual affability, fill his imagination; and he soon ceases to have any other wish than to be well received, or any measure of right and wrong but the opinion of his patron.

A man flattered and obeyed learns to exact grosser adulation and enjoin lower submission. Neither our virtues nor vices are all our own. If there were no cowardice, there would be little insolence: pride cannot rise to any great de-

gree, but by the concurrence of blandishment or the sufferance of tameness. The wretch who would shrink and crouch before one that should dart his eyes upon him with the spirit of natural equality, becomes capricious and tyrannical when he sees himself approached with a downcast look, and hears the soft address of awe and servility. To those who are willing to purchase favour by cringes and compliance, is to be imputed the haughtiness that leaves nothing to be hoped by firmness and integrity.

If, instead of wandering after the meteors of philosophy, which fill the world with splendour for awhile, and then sink and are forgotten, the candidates of learning fixed their eyes upon the permanent lustre of moral and religious truth, they would find a more certain direction to happiness. A little plausibility of discourse, and acquaintance with unnecessary speculations, is dearly purchased, when it excludes those instructions which fortify the heart with resolution, and exalt the spirit to independence.

No. 181. Tuesday, December 10, 1751.

Neu fluitem dubiæ spe pendulus horæ. Hor.

Nor let me float in fortune's pow'r,
Dependent on the future hour. Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—As I have passed much of my life in disquiet and suspense, and lost many opportunities of advantage by a passion which I have reason to believe prevalent in different degrees over a great part of mankind, I cannot but think myself well qualified to warn those who are yet uncaptivated, of the danger which they incur by placing themselves within its influence.

I served an apprenticeship to a linen draper, with uncommon reputation for diligence and fidelity; and at the age of three-and-twenty opened a shop for myself with a large stock, and such credit among all the merchants who were acquainted with my master, that I could command whatever was imported curious or valuable. For five years I proceeded with success proportionate to close application and untainted integrity; was a daring bidder at every sale; always paid my notes before they were due; and advanced so fast in commercial reputation, that I was proverbially marked out as the

model of young traders, and every one expected that a few years would make me an alderman.

In this course of even prosperity, I was one day persuaded to buy a ticket in the lottery. The sum was inconsiderable, part was to be repaid though fortune might fail to favour me, and therefore my established maxims of frugality did not restrain me from so trifling an experiment. The ticket lay almost forgotten till the time at which every man's fate was to be determined; nor did the affair even then seem of any importance, till I discovered by the public papers that the number next to mine had conferred the great prize.

My heart leaped at the thought of such an approach to sudden riches, which I considered myself, however contrarily to the laws of computation, as having missed by a single chance; and I could not forbear to revolve the consequences which such a bounteous allotment would have produced, if it had happened to me. This dream of felicity, by degrees, took possession of my imagination. The great delight of my solitary hours was to purchase an estate, and form plantations with money which once might have been mine, and I never met my friends but I spoiled their merriment by perpetual complaints of my ill luck.

At length another lottery was opened, and I had now so heated my imagination with the prospect of a prize, that I should have pressed among the first purchasers, had not my ardour been withheld by deliberation upon the probability of success from one ticket rather than another. I hesitated long between even and odd; considered the square and cubic numbers through the lottery; examined all those to which good luck had been hitherto annexed; and at last fixed upon one, which, by some secret relation to the events of my life, I thought predestined to make me happy. Delay in great affairs is often mischievous; the ticket was sold, and its possessor could not be found.

I returned to my conjectures, and, after many arts of prognostication, fixed upon another chance, but with less confidence. Never did captive, heir, or lover, feel so much vexation from the slow pace of time, as I suffered between the purchase of my ticket and the distribution of the prizes. I solaced my uneasiness as well as I could, by frequent contemplations of approaching happiness; when the sun rose I knew it would set, and congratulated myself at night that I was so much nearer to my wishes. At last the day came, my ticket appeared, and rewarded all my care and sagacity with a despicable prize of fifty pounds.

My friends, who honestly rejoiced upon my success, were very coldly received; I hid myself a fortnight in the country, that my chagrin might fume away without observation, and then returning to my shop began to listen after another lottery.

With the news of a lottery I was soon gratified; and having now found the vanity of conjecture and inefficacy of computation, I resolved to take the prize by violence, and therefore bought forty tickets—not omitting, however, to divide them between the even and odd numbers, that I might not miss the lucky class. Many conclusions did I form, and many experiments did I try, to determine from which of those tickets I might most reasonably expect riches. At last, being unable to satisfy myself by any modes of reasoning, I wrote the numbers upon dice, and allotted five hours every day to the amusement of throwing them in a garret; and examining the event by an exact register, found, on the evening before the lottery was drawn, that one of my numbers had been turned up five times more than any of the rest in three hundred and thirty thousand throws.

This experiment was fallacious; the first day presented the hopeful ticket, a detestable blank. The rest came out with different fortune, and in conclusion I lost thirty pounds by this great adventure.

I had now wholly changed the cast of my behaviour and the conduct of my life. The shop was for the most part abandoned to my servants; and if I entered it, my thoughts were so engrossed by my tickets, that I scarcely heard or answered a question, but considered every customer as an intruder upon my meditations, whom I was in haste to despatch. I mistook the price of my goods, committed blunders in my bills, forgot to file my receipts, and neglected to regulate my books. My acquaintances by degrees began to fall away; but I perceived the decline of my business with little emotion, because whatever deficiency there might be in my gains I expected the next lottery to supply.

Miscarriage naturally produces diffidence; I began now to seek assistance against ill luck, by an alliance with those that had been more successful. I inquired diligently at what office any prize had been sold, that I might purchase of a propitious vender; solicited those who had been fortunate in former lotteries, to partake with me in my new tickets; and whenever I met with one that had in any event of his life been eminently prosperous, I invited him to take a larger share. I had, by this rule of conduct, so diffused my interest, that I

had a fourth part of fifteen tickets, an eigth of forty, and a sixteenth of ninety.

I waited for the decision of my fate with my former palpitations, and looked upon the business of my trade with the usual neglect. The wheel at last was turned, and its revolutions brought me a long succession of sorrows and disappointments. I indeed often partook of a small prize, and the loss of one day was generally balanced by the gain of the next; but my desires yet remained unsatisfied, and when one of my chances had failed, all my expectation was suspended on those which remained yet undetermined.. At last a prize of five thousand pounds was proclaimed; I caught fire at the cry, and, inquiring the number, found it to be one of my own tickets, which I had divided among those on whose luck I depended, and of which I had retained only a sixteenth part.

You will easily judge with what detestation of himself, a man thus intent upon gain reflected that he had sold a prize which was once in his possession. It was to no purpose that I represented to my mind the impossibility of recalling the past, or the folly of condemning an act, which only its event, an event which no human intelligence could foresee, proved to be wrong. The prize which, though put in my hands, had been suffered to slip from me, filled me with anguish; and knowing that complaint would only expose me to ridicule, I gave myself up silently to grief, and lost by degrees my appetite and my rest.

My indisposition soon became visible: I was visited by my friends, and among them by Eumanthes, a clergyman, whose piety and learning gave him such an ascendant over me, that I could not refuse to open my heart. "There are," said he, "few minds sufficiently firm to be trusted in the hands of chance. Whoever finds himself inclined to anticipate futurity, and exalt possibility to certainty, should avoid every kind of casual adventure, since his grief must be always proportionate to his hope. You have long wasted that time, which, by a proper application, would have certainly, though moderately, increased your fortune, in a laborious and anxious pursuit of a species of gain, which no labour or anxiety, no art or expedient, can secure or promote. You are now fretting away your life in repentance of an act, against which repentance can give no caution, but to avoid the occasion of committing it. Rouse from this lazy dream of fortuitous riches, which if obtained, you could scarcely have enjoyed, because they could confer no consciousness of desert: return to rational and manly industry, and con-

sider the mere gift of luck as below the care of a wise man."

No. 182. Saturday, December, 14, 1751.

——Dives qui fieri vult,
Et cito vult fieri. Juvenal.

The lust of wealth can never bear delay.

It has been observed in a late paper, that we are unreasonably desirous to separate the goods of life from those evils which Providence has connected with them, and to catch advantages without paying the price at which they are offered us. Every man wishes to be rich, but very few have the powers necessary to raise a sudden fortune, either by new discoveries, or by superiority of skill, in any necessary employment; and, among lower understandings, many want the firmness and industry requisite to regular gain and gradual acquisitions.

From the hope of enjoying affluence by methods more compendious than those of labour, and more generally practicable than those of genius, proceeds the common inclination to experiment and hazard, and that willingness to snatch all opportunities of growing rich by chance, which, when it has once taken possession of the mind, is seldom driven out either by time or argument, but continues to waste life in perpetual delusion, and generally ends in wretchedness and want.

The folly of untimely exultation and visionary prosperity is by no means peculiar to the purchasers of tickets: there are multitudes whose life is nothing but a continued lottery; who are always within a few months of plenty and happiness, and, how often soever they are mocked with blanks, expect a prize from the next adventure.

Among the most resolute and ardent of the votaries of chance, may be numbered the mortals whose hope is to raise themselves by a wealthy match; who lay out all their industry on the assiduities of courtship, and sleep and wake with no other ideas than of treats, compliments, guardians, and rivals.

One of the most indefatigable of this class is my old friend Leviculus, whom I have never known for thirty years without some matrimonial project of advantage. Leviculus was bred under a merchant, and by the graces of his person, the sprightliness of his prattle, and the neatness of his dress, so

much enamoured his master's second daughter, a girl of sixteen, that she declared her resolution to have no other husband. Her father, after having chidden her for her undutifulness, consented to the match, not much to the satisfaction of Leviculus, who was sufficiently elated with his conquest to think himself entitled to a larger fortune. He was, however, soon rid of his perplexity, for his mistress died before their marriage.

He was now so well satisfied with his own accomplishments, that he determined to commence fortune-hunter; and when his apprenticeship expired, instead of beginning as was expected, to walk the exchange with a face of importance, or associating himself with those who were most eminent for their knowledge of the stocks, he at once threw off the solemnity of the counting-house, equipped himself with a modish wig, listened to wits in coffee-houses, passed his evenings behind the scenes in the theatres, learned the names of beauties of quality, hummed the last stanzas of fashionable songs, talked with familiarity of high play, boasted of his achievements upon drawers and coachmen, was often brought to his lodgings at midnight in a chair, told with negligence and jocularity of bilking a tailor, and now and then let fly a shrewd jest at a sober citizen.

Thus furnished with irresistible artillery, he turned his batteries upon the female world, and, in the first warmth of self-approbation, proposed no less than the possession of riches and beauty united. He therefore paid his civilities to Flavilla, the only daughter of a wealthy shopkeeper, who not being accustomed to amorous blandishments, or respectful addresses, was delighted with the novelty of love, and easily suffered him to conduct her to the play, and to meet her where she visited. Leviculus did not doubt but her father, however offended by a clandestine marriage, would soon be reconciled by the tears of his daughter, and the merit of his son-in-law, and was in haste to conclude the affair. But the lady liked better to be courted than married, and kept him three years in uncertainty and attendance. At last she fell in love with a young ensign at a ball, and, having danced with him all night, married him in the morning.

Leviculus, to avoid the ridicule of his companions, took a journey to a small estate in the country, where, after his usual inquiries concerning the nymphs in the neighbourhood, he found it proper to fall in love with Altilia, a maiden lady, twenty years older than himself, for whose favour fifteen nephews and nieces were in perpetual contention. They hovered round her with such jealous officiousness, as scarcely

left a moment vacant for a lover. Leviculus, nevertheless, discovered his passion in a letter, and Altilia could not withstand the pleasure of hearing vows and sighs, and flatteries and protestations. She admitted his visits, enjoyed, for five years, the happiness of keeping all her expectants in perpetual alarms, and amused herself with the various stratagems which were practised to disengage her affections. Sometimes she was advised with great earnestness to travel for her health, and sometimes entreated to keep her brother's house. Many stories were spread to the disadvantage of Leviculus, by which she commonly seemed affected for a time, but took care soon afterwards to express her conviction of their falsehood. But being at last satiated with this ludicrous tyranny, she told her lover, when he pressed for the reward of his services, that she was very sensible of his merit, but was resolved not to impoverish an ancient family.

He then returned to the town, and soon after his arrival became acquainted with Latronia, a lady distinguished by the elegance of her equipage and the regularity of her conduct. Her wealth was evident in her magnificence, and her prudence in her economy; and therefore Leviculus, who had scarcely confidence to solicit her favour, readily acquitted fortune of her former debts, when he found himself distinguished by her with such marks of preference as a woman of modesty is allowed to give. He now grew bolder, and ventured to breathe out his impatience before her. She heard him without resentment, in time permitted him to hope for happiness, and at last fixed the nuptial day, without any distrustful reserve of pin-money, or sordid stipulations for jointure and settlements.

Leviculus was triumphing on the eve of marriage, when he heard on the stairs the voice of Latronia's maid, whom frequent bribes had secured in his service. She soon burst into his room, and told him that she could not suffer him to be longer deceived; that her mistress was now spending the last payment of her fortune, and was only supported in her expense by the credit of his estate. Leviculus shuddered to see himself so near a precipice, and found that he was indebted for his escape to the resentment of the maid, who, having assisted Latronia to gain the conquest, quarrelled with her at last about the plunder.

Leviculus was now hopeless and disconsolate, till one Sunday he saw a lady in the Mall, whom her dress declared a widow, and whom, by the jolting prance of her gait, and the broad resplendence of her countenance, he guessed to have lately buried some prosperous citizen. He followed her home,

and found her to be no less than the relict of Prune the grocer, who, having no children, had bequeathed to her all his debts and dues, and his estates real and personal. No formality was necessary in addressing madame Prune, and therefore Leviculus went next morning without an introductor. His declaration was received with a loud laugh; she then collected her countenance, wondered at his impudence, asked if he knew to whom he was talking, then showed him the door, and again laughed to find him confused. Leviculus discovered that this coarseness was nothing more than the coquetry of Cornhill, and next day returned to the attack. He soon grew familiar to her dialect, and in a few weeks heard, without any emotion, hints of gay clothes with empty pockets; concurred in many sage remarks on the regard due to people of property; and agreed with her in detestation of the ladies at the other end of the town, who pinched their bellies to buy fine laces, and then pretended to laugh at the city.

He sometimes presumed to mention marriage; but was always answered with a slap, a hoot, and a flounce. At last he began to press her closer, and thought himself more favourably received; but going one morning, with a resolution to trifle no longer, he found her gone to church with a young journeyman from the neighbouring shop, of whom she had become enamoured at her window.

In these, and a thousand intermediate adventures, has Leviculus spent his time, till he is now grown gray with age, fatigue, and disappointment. He begins at last to find that success is not to be expected; and, being unfit for any employment that might improve his fortune, and unfurnished with any arts that might amuse his leisure, is condemned to wear out a tasteless life in narratives which few will hear, and complaints which none will pity.

No. 183. Tuesday, December 17, 1751.

Nulla fides regni, sociis, omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erat. Lucan.

No faith of Partnership dominion owns;
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

The hostility perpetually exercised between one man and another, is caused by the desire of many for that which only few can possess. Every man would be rich, powerful, and

famous; yet fame, power, and riches are only the names of relative conditions, which imply the obscurity, dependence, and poverty of greater numbers.

This universal and incessant competition produces injury and malice by two motives, interest and envy; the prospect of adding to our possessions what we can take from others, and the hope of alleviating the sense of our disparity by lessening others, though we gain nothing to ourselves.

Of those two malignant and destructive powers, it seems probable at the first view, that interest has the strongest and most extensive influence. It is easy to conceive that opportunities to seize what has been long wanted, may excite desires almost irresistible; but surely the same eagerness cannot be kindled by an accidental power of destroying that which gives happiness to another. It must be more natural to rob for gain, than to ravage only for mischief.

Yet I am inclined to believe, that the great law of mutual benevolence is oftener violated by envy than by interest; and that most of the misery which the defamation of blameless actions, or the obstruction of honest endeavours, brings upon the world, is inflicted by men that propose no advantage to themselves but the satisfaction of poisoning the banquet which they cannot taste, and blasting the harvest which they have no right to reap.

Interest can diffuse itself but to a narrow compass. The number is never large of those who can hope to fill the posts of degraded power, catch the fragments of shattered fortune, or succeed to the honours of depreciated beauty. But the empire of envy has no limits, as it requires to its influence very little help from external circumstances. Envy may always be produced by idleness and pride, and in what place will they not be found?

Interest requires some qualities not universally bestowed. The ruin of another will produce no profit to him who has not discernment to mark his advantage, courage to seize, and activity to pursue it; but the cold malignity of envy may be exerted in a torpid and quiescent state, amidst the gloom of stupidity, in the coverts of cowardice. He that falls by the attacks of interest, is torn by hungry tigers; he may discover and resist his enemies. He that perishes in the ambushes of envy, is destroyed by unknown and invisible assailants, and dies like a man suffocated by a poisonous vapour, without knowledge of his danger, or possibility of contest.

Interest is seldom pursued but at some hazard. He that hopes to gain much, has commonly something to lose, and, when he ventures to attack superiority, if he fails to conquer,

is irrecoverably crushed. But envy may act without expense or danger. To spread suspicion, to invent calumnies, to propagate scandal, requires neither labour nor courage. It is easy for the author of a lie, however malignant, to escape detection, and infamy needs very little industry to assist its circulation.

Envy is almost the only vice which is practicable at all times, and in every place; the only passion which can never lie quiet for want of irritation; its effects therefore are every where discoverable, and its attempts always to be dreaded.

It is impossible to mention a name which any advantageous distinction has made eminent, but some latent animosity will burst out. The wealthy trader, however he may abstract himself from public affairs, will never want those who hint, with Shylock, that ships are but boards. The beauty adorned only with the unambitious graces of innocence and modesty, provokes, whenever she appears, a thousand murmurs of detraction. The genius, even when he endeavours only to entertain or instruct, yet suffers persecution from innumerable critics, whose acrimony is excited merely by the pain of seeing others pleased, and of hearing applauses which another enjoys.

The frequency of envy makes it so familiar, that it escapes our notice; nor do we often reflect upon its turpitude or malignity, till we happen to feel its influence. When he that has given no provocation to malice, but by attempting to excel, finds himself pursued by multitudes whom he never saw, with all the implacability of personal resentment; when he perceives clamour and malice let loose upon him as a public enemy, and incited by every stratagem of defamation: when he hears the misfortunes of his family, or the follies of his youth, exposed to the world: and every failure of conduct, or defect of nature, aggravated and ridiculed; he then learns to abhor those artifices at which he only laughed before, and discovers how much the happiness of life would be advanced by the eradication of envy from the human heart.

Envy is, indeed, a stubborn weed of the mind, and seldom yields to the culture of philosophy. There are, however, considerations, which, if carefully implanted and diligently propagated, might in time overpower and repress it, since no one can nurse it for the sake of pleasure, as its effects are only shame, anguish, and perturbation.

It is above all other vices inconsistent with the character of a social being, because it sacrifices truth and kindness to very weak temptations. He that plunders a wealthy neighbour gains as much as he takes away, and may improve his own

condition in the same proportion as he impairs another's; but he that blasts a flourishing reputation must be content with a small dividend of additional fame, so small as can afford very little consolation to balance the guilt by which it is obtained.

I have hitherto avoided that dangerous and empirical morality, which cures one vice by means of another. But envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its original, and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be preferred. It is one of those lawless enemies of society, against which poisoned arrows may honestly be used. Let it therefore be constantly remembered, that whoever envies another confesses his superiority, and let those be reformed by their pride who have lost their virtue.

It is no slight aggravation of the injuries which envy incites, that they are committed against those who have given no intentional provocation; and that the sufferer is often marked out for ruin, not because he has failed in any duty, but because he has dared to do more than was required.

Almost every other crime is practised by the help of some quality which might have produced esteem or love, if it had been well employed: but envy is mere unmixed and genuine evil; it pursues a hateful end by despicable means, and desires not so much its own happiness as another's misery. To avoid depravity like this, it is not necessary that any one should aspire to heroism or sanctity, but only that he should resolve not to quit the rank which nature assigns him, and wish to maintain the dignity of a human being.

No. 184. Saturday, December 21, 1751.

Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris. Juv.

Intrust thy fortune to the pow'rs above;
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want. Dryden.

As every scheme of life, so every form of writing, has its advantages and inconveniences, though not mingled in the same proportions. The writer of essays escapes many embarrassments to which a large work would have exposed him; he seldom harasses his reason with long trains of consequences, dims his eyes with the perusal of antiquated volumes, or

burthens his memory with great accumulations of preparatory knowledge. A careless glance upon a favourite author, or transient survey of the varieties of life, is sufficient to supply the first hint or seminal idea, which, enlarged by the gradual accretion of matter stored in the mind, is, by the warmth of fancy, easily expanded into flowers, and sometimes ripened into fruit.

The most frequent difficulty by which the authors of these petty compositions are distressed, arises from the perpetual demand of novelty and change. The compiler of a system of science lays his invention at rest, and employs only his judgment, the faculty exerted with less fatigue. Even the relator of feigned adventures, when once the principal characters are established, and the great events regularly connected, finds incidents and episodes crowding upon his mind; every change opens new views, and the latter part of the story grows without labour out of the former. But he that attempts to entertain his reader with unconnected pieces, finds the irksomeness of his task rather increased than lessened by every production. The day calls afresh upon him for a new topic, and he is again obliged to choose, without any principle to regulate his choice.

It is, indeed, true, that there is seldom any necessity of looking far, or inquiring long, for a proper subject. Every diversity of art or nature, every public blessing or calamity, every domestic pain or gratification, every sally of caprice, blunder of absurdity, or stratagem of affectation, may supply matter to him whose only rule is to avoid uniformity. But it often happens, that the judgment is distracted with boundless multiplicity, the imagination ranges from one design to another, and the hours pass imperceptibly away, till the composition can be no longer delayed, and necessity enforces the use of those thoughts which then happen to be at hand. The mind, rejoicing at deliverance on any terms from perplexity and suspense, applies herself vigorously to the work before her, collects embellishments and illustrations, and sometimes finishes, with great elegance and happiness, what in a state of ease and leisure she never had begun.

It is not commonly observed, how much, even of actions considered as particularly subject to choice, is to be attributed to accident, or some cause out of our own power, by whatever name it be distinguished. To close tedious deliberations with hasty resolves, and after long consultations with reason to refer the question to caprice, is by no means peculiar to the essayist. Let him that peruses this paper review the series of his life, and inquire how he was placed in his

present condition. He will find that, of the good or ill which he has experienced, a great part came unexpected, without any visible gradations of approach: that every event has been influenced by causes acting without his intervention; and that, whenever he pretended to the prerogative of foresight, he was mortified with new conviction of the shortness of his views.

The busy, the ambitious, the inconstant, and the adventurous, may be said to throw themselves by design into the arms of fortune, and voluntarily to quit the power of governing themselves; they engage in a course of life in which little can be ascertained by previous measures; nor is it any wonder that their time is past between elation and despondency, hope and disappointment.

Some there are who appear to walk the road of life with more circumspection, and make no step till they think themselves secure from the hazard of a precipice; when neither pleasure nor profit can tempt them from the beaten path; who refuse to climb lest they should fall, or to run lest they should stumble; and move slowly forward, without any compliance with those passions by which the heady and vehement are seduced and betrayed.

Yet even the timorous prudence of this judicious class is far from exempting them from the dominion of chance, a subtle and insidious power, who will intrude upon privacy and embarrass caution. No course of life is so prescribed and limited, but that many actions must result from arbitrary election. Every one must form the general plan of his conduct by his own reflection; he must resolve whether he will endeavour at riches or at content; whether he will exercise private or public virtues: whether he will labour for the general benefit of mankind, or contract his beneficence to his family and dependents.

This question has long exercised the schools of philosophy, but remains yet undecided; and what hope is there that a young man, unacquainted with the arguments on either side, should determine his own destiny otherwise than by chance?

When chance has given him a partner of his bed, whom he prefers to all other women, without any proof of superior desert, chance must again direct him in the education of his children; for, who was ever able to convince himself by arguments, that he had chosen for his son that mode of instruction to which his understanding was best adapted, or by which he would most easily be made wiser or virtuous?

Whoever shall inquire by what motives he was determined on these important occasions, will find them such as his pride

will scarcely suffer him to confess; some sudden ardour of desire, some uncertain glimpse of advantage, some petty competition, some inaccurate conclusion, or some example implicitly reverenced. Such are often the first causes of our resolves; for it is necessary to act, but impossible to know the consequences of action, or to discuss all the reasons which offer themselves on every part to inquisitiveness and solicitude.

Since life itself is uncertain, nothing which has life for its basis can boast much stability. Yet this is but a small part of our perplexity. We set out on a tempestuous sea in quest of some port, where we expect to find rest, but where we are not sure of admission; we are not only in danger of sinking in the way, but of being misled by meteors mistaken for stars, of being driven from our course by the changes of wind, and of losing it by unskilful steerage; yet it sometimes happens, that cross winds blow us to a safer coast, that meteors draw us aside from whirlpools, and that negligence or errour contributes to our escape from mischiefs to which a direct course would have exposed us. Of those that, by precipitate conclusions, involve themselves in calamities without guilt, very few, however they may reproach themselves, can be certain that other measures would have been more successful.

In this state of universal uncertainty, where a thousand dangers hover about us, and none can tell whether the good that he pursues is not evil in disguise, or whether the next step will lead him to safety or destruction, nothing can afford any rational tranquillity, but the conviction that, however we amuse ourselves with unideal sounds, nothing in reality is governed by chance, but that the universe is under perpetual superintendence of him who created it; that our being is in the hands of omnipotent goodness, by whom what appears casual to us, is directed for ends ultimately kind and merciful; and that nothing can finally hurt him who debars not himself from the Divine favour.

No. 185. Tuesday, December 24, 1751.

At vindicta bonum vita jucundius ipsa,
Nempe hoc indocti———
Chrysippus non dicit idem, nec mite Thaletis
Ingenium, dulcique senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem acceptæ sæva inter vincla Cicutæ
Accusatori nollet dare——Quippe minuti
Semper, et infirmi est animi, exiguique voluptas
Ultio. Juv.

But O! Revenge is sweet.
Thus think the crowd; who, eager to engage,
Take quickly fire, and kindle into rage.
Not so mild Thales nor Chrysippus thought,
Nor that good man who drank the pois'nous draught
With mind serene, and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drink as deep as he;
Exalted Socrates! divinely brave!
Injur'd he fell, and dying he forgave,
Too noble for revenge; which still we find
The weakest frailty of a feeble mind. Dryden.

No vicious dispositions of the mind more obstinately resist both the counsels of philosophy and the injunctions of religion, than those which are complicated with an opinion of dignity; and which we cannot dismiss without leaving in the hands of opposition some advantage iniquitously obtained, or suffering from our own prejudices some imputation of pusillanimity.

For this reason, scarcely any law of our Redeemer is more openly transgressed, or more industriously evaded, than that by which he commands his followers to forgive injuries, and prohibits, under the sanction of eternal misery, the gratification of the desire which every man feels to return pain upon him that inflicts it. Many who could have conquered their anger, are unable to combat pride, and pursue offences to extremity of vengeance, lest they should be insulted by the triumph of an enemy.

But certainly no precept could better become him, at whose birth *peace* was proclaimed *to the earth*. For, what would so soon destroy all the order of society, and deform life with violence and ravage, as a permission to every one to judge his own cause, and to apportion his own recompense for imagined injuries.

It is difficult for a man of the strictest justice not to favour himself too much, in the calmest moments of solitary meditation. Every one wishes for the distinctions for which thousands are wishing at the same time, in their own opinion, with better claims. He that, when his reason operates in its full

force, can thus, by the mere prevalence of self-love, prefer himself to his fellow-beings, is very unlikely to judge equitably when his passions are agitated by a sense of wrong, and his attention wholly engrossed by pain, interest, or danger. Whoever arrogates to himself the right of vengeance, shows how little he is qualified to decide his own claims, since he certainly demands what he would think unfit to be granted to another.

Nothing is more apparent, than that, however injured, or however provoked, some must at last be contented to forgive. For, it can never be hoped that he who first commits an injury will contentedly acquiesce in the penalty required: the same haughtiness of contempt, or vehemence of desire, that prompts the act of injustice, will more strongly incite its justification; and resentment can never so exactly balance the punishment with the fault, but there will remain an overplus of vengeance, which even he who condemns his first action will think himself entitled to retaliate. What then can ensue but a continual exacerbation of hatred, an unextinguishable feud, an incessant reciprocation of mischief, a mutual vigilance to entrap, and eagerness to destroy?

Since then the imaginary right of vengeance must be at last remitted, because it is impossible to live in perpetual hostility, and equally impossible that of two enemies, either should first think himself obliged by justice to submission, it is surely eligible to forgive early. Every passion is more easily subdued before it has been long accustomed to possession of the heart; every idea is obliterated with less difficulty, as it has been more slightly impressed, and less frequently renewed. He who has often brooded over his wrongs, pleased himself with schemes of malignity, and glutted his pride with fancied supplications of humbled enmity, will not easily open his bosom to amity and reconciliation, or indulge the gentle sentiments of benevolence and peace.

It is easiest to forgive while there is yet little to be forgiven. A single injury may be soon dismissed from the memory; but a long succession of ill offices by degrees associates itself with every idea; a long contest involves so many circumstances, that every place and action will recall it to the mind; and fresh remembrance of vexation must still enkindle rage, and irritate revenge.

A wise man will make haste to forgive, because he knows the true value of time, and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain. He that willingly suffers the corrosions of inveterate hatred, and gives up his days and nights to the gloom of malice and perturbations of stratagem, cannot surely

be said to consult his ease. Resentment is an union of sorrow with malignity, a combination of a passion which all endeavour to avoid, with a passion which all concur to detest. The man who retires to meditate mischief, and to exasperate his own rage; whose thoughts are employed only on means of distress and contrivances of ruin; whose mind never pauses from the remembrance of his own sufferings, but to indulge some hope of enjoying the calamities of another, may justly be numbered among the most miserable of human beings, among those who are guilty without reward, who have neither the gladness of prosperity, nor the calm of innocence.

Whoever considers the weakness both of himself and others, will not long want persuasives to forgiveness. We know not to what degree of malignity any injury is to be imputed; or how much its guilt, if we were to inspect the mind of him that committed it, would be extenuated by mistake, precipitance, or negligence: we cannot be certain how much more we feel than was intended to be inflicted, or how much we increase the mischief to ourselves by voluntary aggravation. We may charge to design the effects of accident; we may think the blow violent, only because we have made ourselves delicate and tender; we are on every side in danger of errour and of guilt; which we are certain to avoid only by speedy forgiveness.

From this pacific and harmless temper, thus propitious to others and ourselves, to domestic tranquillity and to social happiness, no man is withheld but by pride, by the fear of being insulted by his adversary, or despised by the world.

It may be laid down as an unfailing and universal axiom, that "all pride is abject and mean." It is always an ignorant, lazy, or cowardly acquiescence in a false appearance of excellence, and proceeds not from consciousness of our attainments, but insensibility of our wants.

Nothing can be great which is not right. Nothing which reason candemns can be suitable to the dignity of the human mind. To be driven by external motives from the path which our own heart approves: to give way to any thing but conviction; to suffer the opinion of others to rule our choice, or overpower our resolves; is to submit tamely to the lowest and most ignominious slavery, and to resign the right of directing our own lives.

The utmost excellence at which humanity can arrive, is a constant and determinate pursuit of virtue, without regard to present dangers or advantage; a continual reference of every action to the divine will; an habitual appeal to everlasting justice: and an unvaried elevation of the intellectual eye to

the reward which perseverance only can obtain. But that pride which many, who presume to boast of generous sentiments, allow to regulate their measures, has nothing nobler in view than the approbation of men; of beings whose superiority we are under no obligation to acknowledge, and who, when we have courted them with the utmost assiduity, can confer no valuable or permanent reward; of beings who ignorantly judge of what they do not understand, or partially determine what they never have examined; and whose sentence is therefore of no weight till it has received the ratification of our own conscience.

He that can descend to bribe suffrages like these, at the price of his innocence; he that can suffer the delight of such acclamations to withhold his attention from the commands of the universal Sovereign, has little reason to congratulate himself upon the greatness of his mind: whenever he awakes to seriousness and reflection, he must become despicable in his own eyes, and shrink with shame from the remembrance of his cowardice and folly.

Of him that hopes to be forgiven, it is indispensably required that he forgive. It is therefore superfluous to urge any other motive. On this great duty eternity is suspended; and to him that refuses to practice it, the throne of mercy is inaccessible, and the SAVIOUR of the world has been born in vain.

No. 186. SATURDAY, December 28, 1751.

Pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura ———
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem. HOR.

Place me where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe, or warms the trees;
Where ever-lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th' inclement year;
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph, who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles. FRANCIS.

OF the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations, and part from our opinions; part is distributed by nature, and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove. No man can give to his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian

groves; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness, is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful, as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and therefore none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of England, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport among the woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thoughts towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amidst mountains of snow, he will soon recover his tranquillity, and, while he stirs his fire, or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence, that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth and the severity of the skies, in these dreary countries, are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct or diversify characters; the summer should be spent only in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into these abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their critics, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together, to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages or cities, a youth and maid, who came from differents parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest

of the inhabitants Anningait and Ajut, from a supposed resemblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been tranformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait, for some time heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion, but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection, by inviting her with her parents to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tail of a whale. Ajut seemed not much delighted by this gallantry; yet, however, from that time, was observed rarely to appear but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress, and the judicious disposition of her ornaments, had such an effect upon Anningait, that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroic and tender sentiments, he protested, that "she was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as thyme upon the mountains; that her fingers were white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the eastern cannibals; that he would tear her from the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch her from the paws of Amarock, and rescue her from the ravine of Hafgufa." He concluded with a wish, that "whoever shall attempt to hinder his union with Ajut might be buried without his bow, and that, in the land of souls, his skull might serve for no other use than to catch the droppings of the starry lamps."

This ode being universally applauded, it was expected that Ajut would soon yield to such fervour and accomplishments: but Ajut, with the natural haughtiness of beauty, expected all the forms of courtship; and before she would confess herself conquered the sun returned, the ice broke, and the season of labour called all to their employments.

Anningait and Ajut for a time always went out in the same boat, and divided whatever was caught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, lost no opportunity of signalizing his courage; he attacked the sea-horses on the ice, pursued the seals into the water, and leaped upon the back of the whale while he was yet struggling with the remains of life. Nor [illegible] his diligence less to accumulate all that could be neces- [illegible] winter comfortable; he dried the roe of fishes [illegible] of seals; he entrapped deer and foxes, and dressed

their skins to adorn his bride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, and strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a distant part of the coast before Anningait had completed his store; he therefore entreated Ajut, that she would at last grant him her hand, and accompany him to that part of the country whither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such condescension, but proposed, as a trial of his constancy, that he should return at the end of summer to the cavern where their acquaintance commenced, and there expect the reward of his assiduities. "O virgin, beautiful as the sun shining on the water, consider," said Anningait, "what thou hast required. How easily may my return be precluded by a sudden frost or unexpected fogs! Then must the night be past without my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries which lying strangers so wantonly describe; where the whole year is divided into short days and nights; where the same habitation serves for summer and winter; where they raise houses in rows above the ground, dwell together from year to year, with flocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about them; can travel at any time from one place to another, through ways inclosed with trees, or over walls raised upon the inland waters; and direct their course through wide countries by the sight of green hills or scattered buildings. Even in summer, we have no means of crossing the mountains, whose snows are never dissolved; nor can remove to any distant residence, but in our boats coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut; a few summer-days, and a few winter-nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gaiety; but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut?"

The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid continued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

No. 187. Tuesday, December 31, 1751.

Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,
Non si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hiemis subeamus aquosæ——
Omnia vincit amor. Virgil.

Love alters not for us his hard decrees,
Not tho' beneath the Thracian clime we freeze,
Or the mild bliss of temperate skies forego,
And in mid winter tread Sithonian snow:——
Love conquers all.—— Dryden.

Anningait, however discomposed by the dilatory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and therefore presented her at his departure with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans, and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship, at the price of half a whale and two horns of sea unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of her lover, or so much overpowered by his magnificence, that she followed him to the sea-side; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood a while to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected, laid aside, from that hour, her white deer-skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her shoulders, and forbore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to divert her thoughts by continual application to feminine employments, gathered moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing-coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture: and, while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which she prayed, "that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the rein-deer: that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice, nor faint in the water; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain."

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families, are always rowed by women; for a man will not

debase himself by work which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was therefore exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the stern of the boat, with an intent to leap into the water, and swim back to his mistress; but, recollecting the misery which they must endure in the winter, without oil for the lamp or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed in wild numbers and uncouth images his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. "O life!" says he "frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat it, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure! but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then vanishes for ever? What, love, art thou, but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape? Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had not yet called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, I was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? why, my fair, did I call thee to the banquet? Yet, be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity. I will chase the deer, I will subdue the whale, resistless as the frost of darkness, and unwearied as the summer sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roefish and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and hare shall cover thy couch; the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold; and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling."

Anningait having with these sentiments consoled his grief, and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw the whales spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing-boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon, with incredible courage and dexterity; and, by dividing his time between the chase and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut, in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk, on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in child birth, and his father, the most expert fisher of

Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four men's and two women's boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five-and-twenty seals buried in the snow against the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her lover and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated angekkok of that part of the country, and, by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise that, when Ajut should consult him he would declare that her lover was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and inquired what events were to befall her; with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her desires. The angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret; and Norngsuk, depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but, finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated; she remonstrated; she wept, and raved; but, finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to ensnare, taking care, at an hour when she was not likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her lover might not miss her at his return.

At last she saw the great boat in which Anningate had departed, stealing slow and heavy-laden along the coast. She ran with all the impatience of affection to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached land, they informed her, that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing-boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut, distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills, without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her: but when at last they retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach; where, finding a fishing-boat, she entered it without hesitation, and, telling those who wondered at her rashness, that she was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion that they were changed into stars; others imagine that Anningait was seized in his passage by the genius of the rocks; and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is, that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay from which the hapless maid departed; and when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

No. 188. Saturday, January 4, 1752.

——Si te colo, Sexte, non amabo. Mart.

The more I honour thee, the less I love.

None of the desires dictated by vanity is more general, or less blamable, than that of being distinguished by the arts of conversation. Other accomplishments may be possessed without opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without danger that the defect can often be remarked; but as no man can live, otherwise than in an hermitage, without hourly pleasure or vexation, from the fondness or neglect of those about him, the faculty of giving pleasure is of continual use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the power of forcing attention wherever they come, whose entrance is considered as a promise of felicity, and whose departure is lamented, like the recess of the sun from the northern climates, as a privation of all that enlivens fancy, or inspires gaiety.

It is apparent, that to excellency in this valuable art some peculiar qualifications are necessary; for every one's experience will inform him, that the pleasure which men are able

to give in conversation, holds no stated proportion to their knowledge or their virtue. Many find their way to the tables and the parties of those who never consider them as of the least importance in any other place; who have all, at one time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem, and been persuaded to try the dangerous experiment of admitting him for a companion, whom we know to be too ignorant for a counsellor, and too treacherous for a friend.

I question whether some abatement of character is not necessary to general acceptance. Few spend their time with much satisfaction under the eye of uncontestable superiority; and therefore, among those whose presence is courted at assemblies of jollity, there are seldom found men eminently distinguished for powers or acquisitions. The wit whose vivacity condemns slower tongues to silence, the scholar whose knowledge allows no man to fancy that he instructs him, the critic who suffers no fallacy to pass undetected, and the reasoner who condemns the idle to thought and the negligent to attention, are generally praised and feared, reverenced and avoided.

He that would please must rarely aim at such excellence as depresses his hearers in their own opinion, or debars them from the hope of contributing reciprocally to the entertainment of the company. Merriment, extorted by sallies of imagination, sprightliness of remark, or quickness of reply, is too often what the Latins call the Sardinian laughter, a distortion of the face without gladness of heart.

For this reason, no style of conversation is more extensively acceptable than the narrative. He who has stored his memory with slight anecdotes, private incidents, and personal peculiarities, seldom fails to find his audience favourable. Almost every man listens with eagerness to contemporary history; for almost every man has some real or imaginary connexion with a celebrated character; some desire to advance or oppose a rising name. Vanity often co-operates with curiosity. He that is a hearer in one place, qualifies himself to become a speaker in another; for though he cannot comprehend a series of argument, or transport the volatile spirit of wit without evaporation, yet he thinks himself able to treasure up the various incidents of a story, and pleases his hopes with the information which he shall give to some inferior society.

Narratives are for the most part heard without envy, because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual qualities above the common rate. To be acquainted with facts not yet echoed by plebeian mouths, may happen to one man as

well as to another; and to relate them when they are known, has in appearance so little difficulty, that every one concludes himself equal to the task.

But it is not easy, and in some situations of life not possible, to accumulate such a stock of materials as may support the expense of continual narration; and it frequently happens, that they who attempt this method of ingratiating themselves, please only at the first interview; and, for want of new supplies of intelligence, wear out their stories by continual repetition.

There would be, therefore, little hope of obtaining the praise of a good companion, were it not to be gained by more compendious methods; but such is the kindness of mankind to all, except those who aspire to real merit and rational dignity, that every understanding may find some way to excite benevolence; and whoever is not envied may learn the art of procuring love. We are willing to be pleased, but are not willing to admire: we favour the mirth or officiousness that solicits our regard, but oppose the worth or spirit that enforces it.

The first place among those that please, because they desire only to please, is due to the *merry fellow*, whose laugh is loud, and whose voice is strong; who is ready to echo every jest with obstreperous approbation, and countenance every frolic with vociferations of applause. It is not necessary to a merry fellow to have in himself any fund of jocularity, or force of conception: it is sufficient that he always appears in the highest exaltation of gladness; for the greater part of mankind are gay or serious by infection, and follow without resistance the attraction of example.

Next to the merry fellow is the *good-natured man*, a being generally without benevolence, or any other virtue than such as indolence and insensibility confer. The characteristic of a good-natured man is to bear a joke; to sit unmoved and unaffected amidst noise and turbulence, profaneness and obscenity; to hear every tale without contradiction; to endure insult without reply; and to follow the stream of folly, whatever course it shall happen to take. The good-natured man is commonly the darling of the petty wits, with whom they exercise themselves in the rudiments of raillery; for he never takes advantage of failings, nor disconcerts a puny satirist with unexpected sarcasms; but, while the glass continues to circulate, contentedly bears the expense of uninterrupted laughter, and retires rejoicing at his own importance.

The *modest man* is a companion of a yet lower rank, whose only power of giving pleasure is not to interrupt it. The modest man satisfies himself with peaceful silence, which all

his companions are candid enough to consider as proceeding not from inability to speak, but willingness to hear.

Many, without being able to attain any general character of excellence, have some single art of entertainment which serves them as a passport through the world. One I have known for fifteen years the darling of a weekly club, because every night, precisely at eleven, he begins his favourite song, and during the vocal performance, by corresponding motions of his hand, chalks out a giant upon the wall. Another has endeared himself to a long succession of acquaintances by sitting among them with his wig reversed; another, by contriving to smut the nose of any stranger who was to be initiated in the club; another, by purring like a cat, and then pretending to be frighted; and another, by yelping like a hound, and calling to the drawers to drive out the dog.

Such are the arts by which cheerfulness is promoted, and sometimes friendship established; arts, which those who despise them should not rigorously blame, except when they are practised at the expense of innocence; for it is always necessary to be loved, but not always necessary to be reverenced.

No. 189. Tuesday, January 7, 1752.

Quod tam grande sophos clamat tibi turba togata,
Non tu, Pomponi, cœna diserta tua est. Mart.

Resounding plaudits thro' the crowd have rung;
Thy treat is eloquent, and not thy tongue. F. Lewis.

The world scarcely affords opportunities of making any observation more frequently than on false claims to commendation. Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities which he does not possess, and to gain applause which he cannot keep; so that scarcely can two persons casually meet, but one is offended or diverted by the ostentation of the other.

Of these pretenders it is fit to distinguish those who endeavour to deceive from them who are deceived; those who by designed impostures promote their interest, or gratify their pride, from them who mean only to force into regard their latent excellencies and neglected virtues; who believe themselves qualified to instruct or please, and therefore invite the notice of mankind.

The artful and fraudulent usurpers of distinction deserve

greater severities than ridicule and contempt, since they are seldom content with empty praise, but are instigated by passions more pernicious than vanity. They consider the reputation which they endeavour to establish, as necessary to the accomplishment of some subsequent design, and value praise only as it may conduce to the success of avarice or ambition.

The commercial world is very frequently put into confusion by the bankruptcy of merchants, that assumed the splendour of wealth only to obtain the privilege of trading with the stock of other men, and of contracting debts which nothing but lucky casualties could enable them to pay; till, after having supported their appearance a while by tumultuous magnificence of boundless traffic, they sink at once, and drag down into poverty those whom their equipages had induced to trust them.

Among wretches that place their happiness in the favour of the great, of beings whom only high titles or large estates set above themselves, nothing is more common than to boast of confidence which they do not enjoy; to sell promises which they know their interest unable to perform; and to reimburse the tribute which they pay to an imperious master, from the contributions of meaner dependents, whom they can amuse with tales of their influence, and hopes of their solicitation.

Even among some, too thoughtless and volatile for avarice or ambition, may be found a species of falsehood more detestable than the levee or exchange can show. There are men that boast of debaucheries, of which they never had address to be guilty; ruin, by lewd tales, the characters of women to whom they are scarcely known or by whom they have been rejected; destroy, in a drunken frolic, the happiness of families; blast the bloom of beauty, and intercept the reward of virtue.

Other artifices of falsehood, though utterly unworthy of an ingenuous mind, are not yet to be ranked with flagitious enormities, nor is it necessary to incite sanguinary justice against them, since they may be adequately punished by detection and laughter. The traveller who describes cities which he has never seen; the squire who, at his return from London, tells of his intimacy with nobles to whom he has only bowed in the park or coffee-house; the author who entertains his admirers with stories of the assistance which he gives to wits of a higher rank; the city dame who talks of her visits at great houses, where she happens to know the cook-maid, are surely such harmless animals as truth herself may be content to despise without desiring to hurt them.

But of the multitudes who struggle in vain for distinction, and display their own merits only to feel more acutely the sting of neglect, a great part are wholly innocent of deceit, and are betrayed, by infatuation and credulity, to that scorn with which the universal love of praise incites us all to drive feeble competitors out of our way.

Few men survey themselves with so much severity, as not to admit prejudices in their own favour, which an artful flatterer may gradually strengthen, till wishes for a particular qualification are improved to hopes of attainment, and hopes of attainment to belief of possession. Such flatterers every one will find, who has power to reward her assiduities. Wherever there is wealth there will be dependence and expectation. and wherever there is dependence there will be an emulation of servility.

Many of the follies which provoke general censure, are the effects of such vanity as, however it might have wantoned in the imagination, would scarcely have dared the public eye, had it not been animated and emboldened by flattery. Whatever difficulty there may be in the knowledge of ourselves, scarcely any one fails to suspect his own imperfections, till he is elevated by others to confidence. We are almost all naturally modest and timorous; but fear and shame are uneasy sensations, and whosoever helps to remove them is received with kindness.

Turpicula was the heiress of a large estate, and, having lost her mother in her infancy, was committed to a governess, whom misfortunes had reduced to suppleness and humility. The fondness of Turpicula's father would not suffer him to trust her at a public school; but he hired domestic teachers, and bestowed on her all the accomplishments that wealth could purchase. But how many things are necessary to happiness which money cannot obtain! Thus secluded from all with whom she might converse on terms of equality, she heard none of those intimations of her defects, which envy, petulance, or anger, produced among children, where they are not afraid of telling what they think.

Turpicula saw nothing but obsequiousnes, and heard nothing but commendations. None are so little acquainted with the heart, as not to know that woman's first wish is to be handsome, and that consequently the readiest method of obtaining her kindness is to praise her beauty. Turpicula had a distorted shape and a dark complexion; yet, when the impudence of adulation had ventured to tell her of the commanding dignity of her motion, and the soft enchantment of her smile, she was easily convinced that she was the delight or torment of every eye, and that all who gazed upon her felt the fire of

envy or love. She therefore neglected the culture of an understanding which might have supplied the defects of her form, and applied all her care to the decoration of her person; for she considered that more could judge of beauty than of wit, and was, like the rest of human beings, in haste to be admired. The desire of conquest naturally led her to the lists in which beauty signalizes her power. She glittered at court, fluttered in the park, and talked aloud in the front-box; but after a thousand experiments of her charms, was at last convinced that she had been flattered, and that her glass was honester than her maid.

No. 190. Saturday, January 11, 1752.

Ploravere suis, non respondere favorem
Quæsitum meritis. Hor.

Henry and Alfred———
Clos'd their long glories with a sigh, to find
Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind. Pope.

Among the emirs and visiers, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne, to assist the counsels or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the first place was long held by Morad, the son of Hanuth, Morad, having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wafted to the pinnacles of Agra, by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The emperor called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the keys of riches, and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Indian ocean, every tongue faltered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity; every day increased his wealth, and extended his influence. The sages repeated his maxims, the captains of thousands waited his commands. Competition withdrew into the cavern of envy, and discontent trembled at her own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory, as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad, the clouds of sorrow gathered round his head, and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that for-

sook him were his poets; their example was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures; and only a few, whose virtue had entitled them to favour, were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud, his friends stood contented with frigid neutrality, and the voice of truth was overborn by clamour. He was divested of his power, deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants, and flattery, that he knew not how to fill up his hours in solitude; he saw with regret the sun rise to force on his eye a new day for which he had no use; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey, or sleeping in his den.

His discontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physic, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch peevish and restless, rather afraid to die than desirous to live. His domestics, for a time redoubled their assiduities, but finding that no officiousness could sooth, nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth, and he that once commanded nations, often languished in his chamber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state, he commanded messengers to recall his eldest son Abouzaid from the army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account of his father's sickness, and hasted by long journeys to his place of residence. Morad was yet living, and felt his strength return at the embraces of his son; then commanding him to sit down at his bed-side, "Abouzaid," says he, "thy father has no more to hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth; the cold hand of the angel of death is now upon him, and the voracious grave is howling for his prey. Hear, therefore, the precepts of ancient experience, let not my last instructions issue forth in vain. Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous, thou hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My power is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures have rewarded my accusers; but my inheritance the clemency of the emperor has spared, and my wisdom his anger could not take away. Cast thine eyes round thee, whatever thou beholdest will, in a few hours, be thine; apply thine ear to my dictates, and these possessions will promote thy happiness. Aspire not to public honours, enter not the palaces of kings; thy wealth will set thee above insult, let thy moderation keep thee below envy. Content

thyself with private dignity, diffuse thy riches among thy friends, let every day extend thy beneficence, and suffer not thy heart to be at rest till thou art loved by all to whom thou art known. In the height of my power, I said to defamation, Who will hear thee? and to artifice, What canst thou perform? But, my son, despise not thou the malice of the weakest; remember that venom supplies the want of strength, and that the lion may perish by the puncture of an asp."

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid, after the months of mourning, determined to regulate his conduct by his father's precepts, and cultivate the love of mankind by every art of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered, that domestic happiness was first to be secured, and that none have so much power of doing good or hurt, as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the bursts of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants, and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers, who being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of the servants; the servant immediately confessed that he unbarred the door, because another not more worthy of confidence was intrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced that a dependent could not easily be made a friend; and that, while many were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought himself at liberty to indulge his own caprice, and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations, and difference of sentiments, and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterwards determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a larger circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy, and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship, now refused to accept his acquaintance; and of those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward toward intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured because he was not distinguish-

ed above the rest. By degrees all made advances, and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the music sounded in empty rooms; and Abouzaid was left to form in solitude some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wantoned in unexperienced plenty, and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which they had been rescued, and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs and dismissed them, and from that hour continued blind to colours, and deaf to panegyric.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. "Hamet," said he, "thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments: I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be rewarded by human benevolence; I shall henceforth do good, and avoid evil, without respect to the opinion of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him."

No. 191. Tuesday, January 14, 1752.

Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper. Hor.

The youth——
Yielding like wax, th' impressive folly bears;
Rough to reproof, and slow to future cares. Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Dear Mr. Rambler—I have been four days confined to my chamber by a cold, which has already kept me from three plays, nine sales, five shows, and six card-tables, and put me seventeen visits behindhand; and the doctor tells my mamma, that if I fret and cry, it will settle in my head, and I shall not be fit to be seen these six weeks. But, dear Mr. Rambler, how can I help it? At this very time Melissa is

dancing with the prettiest gentleman;—she will breakfast with him to-morrow, and then run to two auctions, and hear compliments, and have presents; then she will be drest, and visit, and get a ticket to the play; then go to cards and win, and come home with two flambeaux before her chair. Dear Mr. Rambler, who can bear it?

My aunt has just brought me a bundle of your papers for my amusement. She says, you are a philosopher, and will teach me to moderate my desires, and look upon the world with indifference. But, dear sir, I do not wish nor intend to moderate my desires, nor can I think it proper to look upon the world with indifference, till the world looks with indifference on me. I have been forced, however, to sit this morning a whole quarter of an hour with your paper before my face; but just as my aunt came in, Phyllida had brought me a letter from Mr. Trip, which I put within the leaves; and read about *absence*, and *inconsoleableness*, and *ardour*, and *irresistible passion*, and *eternal constancy*, while my aunt imagined that I was puzzling myself with your philosophy, and often cried out, when she saw me look confused, "If there is any word which you do not understand, child, I will explain it."

Dear soul! how old people that think themselves wise may be imposed upon! But it is fit that they should take their turn; for I am sure, while they can keep poor girls close in the nursery, they tyrannize over us in a very shameful manner, and fill our imaginations with tales of terrour, only to make us live in quiet subjection, and fancy that we can never be safe but by their protection.

I have a mamma and two aunts, who have all been formerly celebrated for wit and beauty, and are still generally admired by those who value themselves upon their understanding, and love to talk of vice and virtue, nature and simplicity, and beauty and propriety: but if there was not some hope of meeting me, scarcely a creature would come near them that wears a fashionable coat. These ladies, Mr. Rambler, have had me under their government fifteen years and a half, and have all that time been endeavouring to deceive me by such representations of life as I now find not to be true; but I know not whether I ought to impute them to ignorance or malice, as it is possible the world may be much changed since they mingled in general conversation.

Being desirous that I should love books, they told me, that nothing but knowledge could make me an agreeable companion to men of sense, or qualify me to distinguish the superficial glitter of vanity from the solid merit of understanding;

and that a habit of reading would enable me to fill up the vacuities of life without the help of silly or dangerous amusements, and preserve me from the snares of idleness and the inroads of temptation.

But their principal intention was to make me afraid of men; in which they succeeded so well for a time, that I durst not look in their faces, or be left alone with them in a parlour; for they made me fancy that no man ever spoke but to deceive, or looked but to allure; that the girl who suffered him that had once squeezed her hand, to approach her a second time, was on the brink of ruin; and that she who answered a billet, without consulting her relations, gave love such power over her, that she would certainly become either poor or infamous.

From the time that my leading-strings were taken off, I scarce heard any mention of my beauty but from the milliner, the mantua-maker, and my own maid; for my mamma never said more, when she heard me commended, but "the girl is very well," and then endeavoured to divert my attention by some inquiry after my needle or my book.

It is now three months since I have been suffered to pay and receive visits, to dance at public assemblies, to have a place kept for me in the boxes, and to play at lady Racket's rout; and you may easily imagine what I think of those who have so long cheated me with false expectations, disturbed me with fictitious terrours, and concealed from me all that I have found to make the happiness of woman.

I am so far from perceiving the usefulness or necessity of books, that, if I had not dropped all pretensions to learning, I should have lost Mr. Trip, whom I once frighted into another box by retailing some of Dryden's remarks upon a tragedy; for Mr. Trip declares that he hates nothing like hard words, and I am sure there is not a better partner to be found; his very walk is a dance. I have talked once or twice among ladies about principles and ideas; but they put their fans before their faces, and told me I was too wise for them, who for their part never pretended to read any thing but the play-bill; and then asked me the price of my best head.

Those vacancies of time which are to be filled up with books, I have never yet obtained; for consider, Mr. Rambler, I go to bed late, and therefore cannot rise early; as soon as I am up, I dress for the gardens; then walk in the park; then always go to some sale or show, or entertainment at the Little Theatre; then must be dressed for dinner: then must pay my visits; then walk in the park; then hurry to the play; and from thence to the card-table. This is the gene-

ral course of the day, when there happens nothing extraordinary; but sometimes I ramble into the country, and come back again to a ball; sometimes I am engaged for a whole day and part of the night. If, at any time, I gain an hour by not being at home, I have so many things to do, so many orders to give to the milliner, so many alterations to make in my clothes, so many visitants' names to read over, so many invitations to accept or refuse, so many cards to write, and so many fashions to consider, that I am lost in confusion, forced at last to let in company or step into my chair, and leave half my affairs to the direction of my maid.

This is the round of my day; and when shall I either stop my course, or so change it as to want a book? I suppose it cannot be imagined that any of these diversions will soon be at an end. There will always be gardens, and a park, and auctions, and shows, and play-houses, and cards: visits will always be paid, and clothes always be worn; and how can I have time unemployed upon my hands?

But I am most at a loss to guess for what purpose they related such tragic stories of the cruelty, perfidy, and artifices of men, who, if they ever were so malicious and destructive, have certainly now reformed their manners. I have not, since my entrance into the world, found one who does not profess himself devoted to my service, and ready to live or die as I shall command him. They are so far from intending to hurt me, that their only contention is who shall be allowed most closely to attend, and most frequently to treat me; when different places of entertainment or schemes of pleasure are mentioned, I can see the eye sparkle and the cheeks glow of him whose proposals obtain my approbation; he then leads me off in triumph, adores my condescension, and congratulates himself that he has lived to the hour of felicity. Are these, Mr. Rambler, creatures to be feared? Is it likely that an injury will be done me by those who can enjoy life only while I favour them with my presence?

As little reason can I yet find to suspect them of stratagems and fraud. When I play at cards, they never take advantage of my mistakes, nor exact from me a rigorous observation of the game. Even Mr. Shuffle, a grave gentleman, who has daughters older than myself, plays with me so negligently, that I am sometimes inclined to believe he loses his money by design; and yet he is so fond of play, that he says he will one day take me to his house in the country, that we may try by ourselves who can conquer. I have not yet promised him; but when the town grows a little empty, I shall think upon it, for I want some trinkets, like Letitia's,

to my watch. I do not doubt my lack, but must study some means of amusing my relations.

For all these distinctions I find myself indebted to that beauty which I was never suffered to hear praised, and of which, therefore, I did not before know the full value. The concealment was certainly an intentional fraud, for my aunts have eyes like other people, and I am every day told, that nothing but blindness can escape the influence of my charms. Their whole account of that world which they pretend to know so well, has been only one fiction entangled with another; and, though the modes of life oblige me to continue some appearance of respect, I cannot think that they, who have been so clearly detected in ignorance, or imposture, have any right to the esteem, veneration, or obedience of,

Sir, yours,

BELLARIAL.

No. 192. SATURDAY, January, 18, 1752.

Γένος ωδὲν εἰς ἔρωτα,
Σοφίη, τρόπος πατεῖται.
Μόνον ἄργυρον βλέπου ιν.
Ἀπόλοιτο πρῶτος αὐτὸς
Ὁ τον ἄργυρον φιλήσας,
Διὰ τυτον ωκ ἀδελφος,
Διὰ τυτον ω τοκῆες
Πόλεμοι, φόνοι δὲ αὐτόν.
Το δὲ χεῖρον, ἀλλόμεσθα
Διὰ τυτον οἱ φιλυτες. ANACREON.

Vain the noblest birth would prove,
Nor worth nor wit avail in love;
'Tis gold alone succeeds—by gold
The venal sex is bought and sold.
Accurs'd be he who first of yore
Discovered the pernicious ore!
This sets a brother's heart on fire,
And arms the son against the sire;
And what, alas! is worse than all,
To this the lover owes his fall. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—I am the son of a gentleman, whose ancestors for many ages held the first rank in the country; till at last one of them, too desirous of popularity, set his house open, kept

a table covered with continual profusion, and distributed his beef and ale to such as chose rather to live upon the folly of others, than their own labour, with such thoughtless liberality, that he left a third part of his estate mortgaged. His successor, a man of spirit, scorned to impair his dignity by parsimonious retrenchments, or to admit, by a sale of his lands, any participation of the rights of his manor; he therefore made another mortgage to pay the interest of the former, and pleased himself with the reflection, that his son would have the hereditary estate without the diminution of an acre.

Nearly resembling this was the practice of my wise progenitors for many ages. Every man boasted the antiquity of his family, resolved to support the dignity of his birth, and lived in splendour and plenty at the expense of his heir, who, sometimes by a wealthy marriage, and sometimes by lucky legacies, discharged part of the incumbrances, and thought himself entitled to contract new debts, and to leave to his children the same inheritance of embarrassment and distress.

Thus the estate perpetually decayed; the woods were felled by one, the park ploughed by another, the fishery let to farmers by a third; at last the old hall was pulled down to spare the cost of reparation, and part of the materials sold to build a small house with the rest. We are now openly degraded from our original rank, and my father's brother was allowed with less reluctance to serve an apprenticeship, though we never reconciled ourselves heartily to the sound of haberdasher, but always talked of ware-houses and a merchant, and when the wind happened to blow loud, affected to pity the hazards of commerce, and to sympathize with the solicitude of my poor uncle, who had the true retailer's terrour of adventure, and never exposed himself or his property to any wider water than the Thames.

In time, however, by continual profit and small expenses, he grew rich, and began to turn his thoughts towards rank. He hung the arms of the family over his parlour-chimney; pointed at a chariot decorated only with a cypher; became of opinion that money could not make a gentleman; resented the petulance of upstarts; told stories of alderman Puff's grandfather the porter; wondered that there was no better method for regulating precedence; wished for some dress peculiar to men of fashion; and when his servant presented a letter, always inquired whether it came from his brother the esquire.

My father was careful to send him game by every carrier, which, though the conveyance often cost more than the value, was well received, because it gave him an opportunity of call-

ing his friends together, describing the beauty of his brother's seat, and lamenting his own folly, whom no remonstrances could withhold from polluting his fingers with a shop-book.

The little presents which we sent were always returned with the greatest munificence. He was desirous of being the second founder of his family, and could not bear that we should be any longer outshone by those whom we considered as climbers upon our ruins, and usurpers of our fortune. He furnished our house with all the elegance of fashionable expense, and was careful to conceal his bounties, lest the poverty of his family should be suspected.

At length it happened that, by misconduct like our own, a large estate, which had been purchased from us, was again exposed to the best bidder. My uncle, delighted with an opportunity of reinstating the family in their possessions, came down with treasures scarcely to be imagined in a place where commerce has not made large sums familiar, and at once drove all the competitors away, expedited the writings, and took possession. He now considered himself as superior to trade, disposed of his stock, and as soon as he had settled his economy, began to show his rural sovereignty, by breaking the hedges of his tenants in hunting, and seizing the guns or nets of those whose fortunes did not qualify them for sportsmen. He soon afterwards solicited the office of sheriff, from which all his neighbours were glad to be reprieved, but which he regarded as a resumption of ancestral claims, and a kind of restoration to blood after the attainder of a trade.

My uncle, whose mind was so filled with this change of his condition, that he found no want of domestic entertainment, declared himself too old to marry, and resolved to let the newly purchased estate fall into the regular channel of inheritance. I was therefore considered as heir apparent, and courted with officiousness and caresses, by the gentlemen who had hitherto coldly allowed me that rank which they could not refuse, depressed me with studied neglect, and irritated me with ambiguous insults.

I felt not much pleasure from the civilities for which I knew myself indebted to my uncle's industry, till, by one of the invitations which every day now brought me, I was induced to spend a week with Lucius, whose daughter Flavia I had often seen and admired like others, without any thought of nearer approaches. The inequality which had hitherto kept me at a distance being now levelled, I was received with every evidence of respect: Lucius told me the fortune which he intended for his favourite daughter, many odd accidents obliged us to be often together without company, and I soon

began to find that they were spreading for me the nets of matrimony.

Flavilla was all softness and complaisance. I who had been excluded by a narrow fortune from much acquaintance with the world, and never been honoured before with the notice of so fine a lady, was easily enamoured. Lucius either perceived my passion, or Flavilla betrayed it; care was taken that our private meetings should be less frequent, and my charmer confessed by her eyes how much pain she suffered from our restraint. I renewed my visit upon every pretence, but was not allowed one interview without witness; at last I declared my passion to Lucius, who received me as a lover worthy of his daughter, and told me that nothing was wanting to his consent, but that my uncle should settle his estate upon me. I objected the indecency of encroaching on his life, and the danger of provoking him by such an unseasonable demand. Lucius seemed not to think decency of much importance, but admitted the danger of displeasing, and concluded that as he was now old and sickly, we might, without any inconvenience, wait for his death.

With this resolution I was better contented, as it procured me the company of Flavilla, in which the days passed away amidst continual rapture; but in time I began to be ashamed of sitting idle, in expectation of growing rich by the death of my benefactor, and proposed to Lucius, many schemes of raising my own fortune by such assistance as I knew my uncle willing to give me. Lucius, afraid lest I should change my affection in absence, diverted me from my design by dissuasives to which my passion easily listened. At last my uncle died, and considering himself as neglected by me, from the time that Flavilla took possession of my heart, left his estate to my younger brother, who was always hovering about his bed, and relating stories of my pranks and extravagance, my contempt of the commercial dialect, and my impatience to be selling stock.

My condition was soon known, and I was no longer admitted by the father of Flavilla. I repeated the protestations of regard, which had been formerly returned with so much ardour, in a letter which she received privately, but returned by her father's footman. Contempt has driven out my love, and I am content to have purchased, by the loss of fortune, an escape from a harpy, who has joined the artifices of age to the allurements of youth. I am now going to pursue my former projects with a legacy which my uncle bequeathed me, and if I succeed, shall expect to hear of the repentance of Flavilla. I am, Sir, Yours, &c.

 CONSTANTIUS.

No. 193. Tuesday, January 21, 1752.

Laudis amore tumes? sunt certa piacula quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello. Hor.

Or art thou vain? books yield a certain spell
To stop thy tumour; you shall cease to swell
When you have read them thrice, and studied well. Creech.

Whatever is universally desired, will be sought by industry and artifice, by merit and crimes, by means good and bad, rational and absurd, according to the prevalence of virtue or vice, of wisdom or folly. Some will always mistake the degree of their own desert, and some will desire that others may mistake it. The cunning will have recourse to stratagem, and the powerful to violence, for the attainment of their wishes: some will stoop to theft, and others venture upon plunder.

Praise is so pleasing to the mind of man, that it is the original motive of almost all our actions. The desire of commendation, as of every thing else, is varied indeed by innumerable differences of temper, capacity and knowledge; some have no higher wish than for the applause of a club: some expect the acclamations of a county; and some have hoped to fill the mouths of all ages and nations with their names. Every man pants for the highest eminence within his view; none, however mean, ever sinks below the hope of being distinguished by his fellow-beings, and very few have, by magnanimity or piety, been so raised above it, as to act wholly without regard to censure or opinion.

To be praised, therefore, every man resolves; but resolutions will not execute themselves. That which all think too parsimoniously distributed to their own claims, they will not gratuitously squander upon others, and some expedient must be tried, by which praise may be gained before it can be enjoyed.

Among the innumerable bidders for praise, some are willing to purchase at the highest rate, and offer ease and health, fortune and life. Yet even of these only a small part have gained what they so earnestly desired; the student wastes away in meditation, and the soldier perishes on the ramparts, but unless some accidental advantage co-operates with merit, neither perseverance nor adventure attract attention, and learning and bravery sink into the grave, without honour or remembrance.

But ambition and vanity generally expect to be gratified on easier terms. It has been long observed, that what is procured by skill or labour to the first possessor, may be afterwards transferred for money; and that the man of wealth may partake all the acquistions of courage without hazard, and all the products of industry without fatigue. It was easily discovered, that riches would obtain praise among other conveniences, and that he whose pride was unluckily associated with laziness, ignorance, or cowardice, needed only to pay the hire of a panegyrist, and he might be regaled with periodical eulogies; might determine, at leisure, what virtue or science he would be pleased to appropriate, and be lulled in the evening with soothing serenades, or waked in the morning by sprightly gratulations.

The happiness which mortals receive from the celebration of beneficence which never relieved, eloquence which never persuaded, or elegance which never pleased, ought not to be envied or disturbed, when they are known honestly to pay for their entertainment. But there are unmerciful exactors of adulation, who withhold the wages of venality; retain their encomiast from year to year by general promises and ambiguous blandishments; and when he has run through the whole compass of flattery, dismiss him with contempt, because his vein of fiction is exhausted.

A continual feast of commendation is only to be obtained by merit or by wealth; many are therefore obliged to content themselves with single morsels, and recompense the infrequency of their enjoyment by excess and riot, whenever fortune sets the banquet before them. Hunger is never delicate; they who are seldom gorged to the full with praise, may be safely fed with gross compliments; for the appetite must be satisfied before it is disgusted.

It is easy to find the moment at which vanity is eager for sustenance, and all that impudence or servility can offer will be well received. When any one complains of the want of what he is known to possess in an uncommon degree, he certainly waits with impatience to be contradicted. When the trader pretends anxiety about the payment of his bills, or the beauty remarks how frightfully she looks, then is the lucky moment to talk of riches or of charms, of the death of lovers, or the honour of a merchant.

Others there are yet more open and artless, who, instead of suborning a flatterer, are content to supply his place, and, as some animals impregnate themselves, swell with the praises which they hear from their own tongues. *Recte is dicitur laudare sese, cui nemo alius contigit laudator.* "It is right,"

says Erasmus, "that he, whom no one else will commend, should bestow commendations on himself." Of all the sons of vanity, these are surely the happiest and greatest; for what is greatness or happiness but independence on external influences, exemption from hope or fear, and the power of supplying every want from the common stores of nature, which can neither be exhausted nor prohibited? Such is the wise man of the stoics; such is the divinity of the epicureans; and such is the flatterer of himself. Every other enjoyment malice may destroy; every other panegyric envy may withhold; but no human power can deprive the boaster of his own encomiums. Infamy may hiss, or contempt may growl, the hirelings of the great may follow fortune, and the votaries of truth may attend on virtue; but his pleasures still remain the same; he can always listen with rapture to himself, and leave those who dare not repose upon their own attestation, to be elated or depressed by chance, and toil on in the hopeless task of fixing caprice, and propitiating malice.

This art of happiness has been long practised by periodical writers, with little apparent violation of decency. When we think our excellencies overlooked by the world, or desire to recall the attention of the public to some particular performance, we sit down with great composure and write a letter to ourselves. The correspondent, whose character we assume, always addresses us with a deference due to a superior intelligence; proposes his doubts with a proper sense of his own inability; offers an objection with trembling diffidence: and at last has no other pretensions to our notice than his profundity of respect, and sincerity of admiration, his submission to our dictates, and zeal for our success. To such a reader, it is impossible to refuse regard, nor can it easily be imagined with how much alacrity we snatch up the pen which indignation or despair had condemned to inactivity, when we find such candour and judgment yet remaining in the world.

A letter of this kind I had lately the honour of perusing, in which, though some of the periods were negligently closed, and some expressions of familiarity were used, which I thought might teach others to address me with too little reverence, I was so much delighted with the passages in which mention was made of universal learning—unbounded genius—soul of Homer, Pythagoras, and Plato—solidity of thought—accuracy of distinction—elegance of combination—vigour of fancy—strength of reason—and regularity of composition—that I had once determined to lay it before the public. Three times I sent it to the printer, and three times I fetched it back. My modesty was on the point of yielding, when

reflecting that I was about to waste panegyrics on myself, which might be more profitably reserved for my patron, I locked it up for a better hour, in compliance with the farmer's principle, who never eats at home what he can carry to the market.

No. 194. Saturday, January 25, 1752.

Si damnosa senem juvat alea, ludit et hæres
Bullatus, parvoque eadem quatit arma fritillo. Juv.

If gaming does an aged sire entice,
Then my young master swiftly learns the vice,
And shakes in hanging sleeves the little box and dice
J. Dryden, jun.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—That vanity which keeps every man important in his own eyes, inclines me to believe that neither you nor your readers have yet forgotten the name of Eumathes, who sent you a few months ago an account of his arrival at London, with a young nobleman his pupil. I shall therefore continue my narrative without preface or recapitulation.

My pupil, in a very short time, by his mother's countenance and direction, accomplished himself with all those qualifications which constitute puerile politeness. He became in a few days a perfect master of his hat, which with a careless nicety he could put off or on, without any need to adjust it by a second motion. This was not attained but by frequent consultations with his dancing-master, and constant practice before the glass, for he had some rustic habits to overcome; but what will not time and industry perform? A fortnight more furnished him with all the airs and forms of familiar and respectful salutation, from the clap on the shoulder to the humble bow; he practises the stare of strangeness, and the smile of condescension, the solemnity of promise, and the graciousness of encouragement, as if he had been nursed at a levee; and pronounces, with no less propriety than his father, the monosyllables of coldness, and sonorous periods of respectful profession.

He immediately lost the reserve and timidity which solitude and study are apt to impress upon the most courtly genius; was able to enter a crowded room with airy civility; to meet the glances of a hundred eyes without perturbation;

and address those whom he never saw before with ease and confidence. In less than a month his mother declared her satisfaction at his proficiency by a triumphant observation, that she believed *nothing would make him blush.*

The silence with which I was contented to hear my pupil's praises, gave the lady reason to suspect me not much delighted with his acquisitions; but she attributed my discontent to the diminution of my influence, and my fears of losing the patronage of the family; and though she thinks favourably of my learning and morals, she considers me as wholly unacquainted with the customs of the polite part of mankind: and therefore not qualified to form the manners of a young nobleman, or communicate the knowledge of the world. This knowledge she comprises in the rules of visiting, the history of the present hour, an early intelligence of the change of fashions, an extensive acquaintance with the names and faces of persons of rank, and a frequent appearance in places of resort.

All this my pupil pursues with great application. He is twice a day in the Mall, where he studies the dress of every man splendid enough to attract his notice, and never comes home without some observation upon sleeves, button-holes, and embroidery. At his return from the theatre, he can give an account of the gallantries, glances, whispers, smiles, sighs, flirts, and blushes of every box, so much to his mother's satisfaction, that when I attempted to resume my character, by inquiring his opinion of the sentiments and diction of the tragedy, she at once repressed my criticism, by telling me, *that she hoped he did not go to lose his time in attending to the creatures on the stage.*

But his acuteness was most eminently signalized at the masquerade, where he discovered his acquaintance through their disguises, with such wonderful facility, as has afforded the family an inexhaustible topic of conversation. Every new visitor is informed how one was detected by his gait, and another by the swing of his arms, a third by the toss of his head, and another by his favourite phrase; nor can you doubt but these performances receive their just applause, and a genius thus hastening to maturity is promoted by every art of cultivation.

Such have been his endeavours, and such his assistances, that every trace of literature was soon obliterated. He has changed his language with his dress, and, instead of endeavouring at purity or propriety, has no other care than to catch the reigning phrase and current exclamation, till, by copying whatever is peculiar in the talk of all those whose

birth or fortune entitles them to imitation, he has collected every fashionable barbarism of the present winter, and speaks a dialect not to be understood among those who form their style by poring upon authors.

To this copiousness of ideas, and felicity of language, he has joined such eagerness to lead the conversation, that he is celebrated among the ladies as the prettiest gentleman that the age can boast of, except that some who love to talk themselves think him too forward, and others lament that, with so much wit and knowledge, he is not taller.

His mother listens to his observations with her eyes sparkling and her heart beating, and can scarcely contain, in the most numerous assemblies, the expectations which she has formed for his future eminence. Women, by whatever fate, always judge absurdly of the intellects of boys. The vivacity and confidence which attract female admiration, are seldom produced in the early part of life, but by ignorance at least, if not by stupidity; for they proceed not from confidence of right, but fearlessness of wrong. Whoever has a clear apprehension, must have quick sensibility, and where he has no sufficient reason to trust his own judgment, will proceed with doubt and caution, because he perpetually dreads the disgrace of errour. The pain of miscarriage is naturally proportionate to the desire of excellence; and, therefore, till men are hardened by long familiarity with reproach, or have attained, by frequent struggles, the art of suppressing their emotions, diffidence is found the inseparable associate of understanding.

But so little distrust has my pupil of his own abilities, that he has for some time professed himself a wit, and tortures his imagination on all occasions for burlesque and jocularity. How he supports a character which, perhaps, no man ever assumed without repentance, may be easily conjectured. Wit, you know, is the unexpected copulation of ideas, the discovery of some occult relation between images in appearance remote from each other; an effusion of wit, therefore, presupposes an accumulation of knowledge; a memory stored with notions, which the imagination may cull out to compose new assemblages. Whatever may be the native vigour of the mind, she can never form many combinations from few ideas, as many changes can never be rung upon a few bells. Accident may indeed sometimes produce a lucky parallel or a striking contrast; but these gifts of chance are not frequent, and he that has nothing of his own, and yet condemns himself to needless expenses, must live upon loans or theft.

The indulgence which his youth has hitherto obtained, and

the respect which his rank secures, have hitherto supplied the want of intellectual qualifications; and he imagines that all admire who applaud, and that all who laugh are pleased. He therefore returns every day to the charge with increase of courage, though not of strength, and practises all the tricks by which wit is counterfeited. He lays trains for a quibble; he contrives blunders for his footman; he adapts old stories to present characters; he mistakes the question, that he may return a smart answer; he anticipates the argument, that he may plausibly object; when he has nothing to reply, he repeats the last words of his antagonist, then says, "your humble servant," and concludes with a laugh of triumph.

These mistakes I have honestly attempted to correct; but what can be expected from reason unsupported by fashion, splendour, or authority? He hears me, indeed, or appears to hear me, but is soon rescued from the lecture by more pleasing avocations; and shows, diversions, and caresses, drive my precepts from his remembrance.

He at last imagines himself qualified to enter the world, and has met with adventures in his first sally, which I shall, by your paper, communicate to the public.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

of my pupil's history, which though it contains no events very uncommon, may be of use to young men who are in too much haste to trust their own prudence, and quit the wing of protection before they are able to shift for themselves.

When he first settled in London, he was so much bewildered in the enormous extent of the town, so confounded by incessant noise, and crowds, and hurry, and so terrified by rural narratives of the arts of sharpers, the rudeness of the populace, malignity of porters, and treachery of coachmen, that he was afraid to go beyond the door without an attendant, and imagined his life in danger if he was obliged to pass the streets at night in any vehicle but his mother's chair.

He was therefore contented, for a time, that I should accompany him in all his excursions. But his fear abated as he grew more familiar with its objects; and the contempt to which his rusticity exposed him from such of his companions as had accidentally known the town longer, obliged him to dissemble his remaining terrours.

His desire of liberty made him now willing to spare me the trouble of observing his motions; but knowing how much his ignorance exposed him to mischief, I thought it cruel to abandon him to the fortune of the town. We went together every day to a coffee-house, where he met wits, heirs, and fops, airy, ignorant, and thoughtless as himself, with whom he had become acquainted at card-tables, and whom he considered as the only beings to be envied or admired. What were their topics of conversation, I could never discover; for so much was their vivacity depressed by my intrusive seriousness, that they seldom proceeded beyond the exchange of nods and shrugs, an arch grin, or a broken hint, except when they could retire, while I was looking on the papers, to a corner of the room, where they seemed to disburden their imaginations, and commonly vented the superfluity of their sprightliness in a peal of laughter. When they had tittered themselves into negligence, I could sometimes overhear a few syllables, such as,—solemn rascal;—academical airs;—smoke the tutor;—company for gentlemen!—and other broken phrases, by which I did not suffer my quiet to be disturbed, for they never proceeded to avowed indignities, but contented themselves to murmur in secret, and whenever I turned my eye upon them, shrunk into stillness.

He was, however, desirous of withdrawing from the subjection which he could not venture to break, and made a secret appointment to assist his companions in the persecution of a play. His footman privately procured him a catcal, on which he practised, in a back-garret, for two hours in the

afternoon. At the proper time a chair was called; he pretended an engagement at lady Flutter's, and hastened to the place where his critical associates had assembled. They hurried away to the theatre, full of malignity and denunciations against a man whose name they had never heard, and a performance which they could not understand; for they were resolved to judge for themselves, and would not suffer the town to be imposed upon by scribblers. In the pit, they exerted themselves with great spirit and vivacity; called out for the tunes of obscene songs, talked loudly at intervals of Shakspeare and Johnson, played on their catcals a short prelude of terrour, clamoured vehemently for the prologue, and clapped with great dexterity at the first entrance of the players.

Two scenes they heard without attempting interruption: but, being no longer able to restrain their impatience, they then began to exert themselves in groans and hisses, and plied their catcals with incessant diligence; so that they were soon considered by the audience as disturbers of the house, and some who sat near them, either provoked at the obstruction of their entertainment, or desirous to preserve the author from the mortification of seeing his hopes destroyed by children, snatched away their instruments of criticism, and, by the seasonable vibration of a stick, subdued them instantaneously to decency and silence.

To exhilarate themselves after this vexatious defeat, they posted to a tavern, where they recovered their alacrity, and, after two hours of obstreperous jollity, burst out big with enterprise, and panting for some occasion to signalize their prowess. They proceeded vigorously through two streets, and with very little opposition dispersed a rabble of drunkards less daring than themselves, then rolled two watchmen in the kennel, and broke the windows of a tavern in which the fugitives took shelter. At last it was determined to march up to a row of chairs, and demolish them for standing on the pavement; the chairmen formed a line of battle, and blows were exchanged for a time with equal courage on both sides. At last the assailants were overpowered, and the chairmen, when they knew their captives, brought them home by force.

The young gentleman, next morning, hung his head, and was so much ashamed of his outrages and defeat, that perhaps he might have been checked in his first follies, had not his mother, partly in pity of his dejection, and partly in approbation of his spirit, relieved him from his perplexity by paying the damages privately, and discouraging all animadversion and reproof.

This indulgence could not wholly preserve him from the

remembrance of his disgrace, nor at once restore his confidence and elation. He was for three days silent, modest, and compliant, and thought himself neither too wise for instruction, nor too manly for restraint. But his levity overcame this salutary sorrow; he began to talk with his former raptures of masquerades, taverns and frolics; blustered when his wig was not combed with exactness; and threatened destruction to a tailor who had mistaken his directions about the pocket.

I knew that he was now rising again above control, and that his inflation of spirits would burst out into some mischievous absurdity. I therefore watched him with great attention; but one evening, having attended his mother at a visit, he withdrew himself, unsuspected, while the company was engaged at cards. His vivacity and officiousness were soon missed, and his return impatiently expected; supper was delayed and conversation suspended; every coach that rattled through the street was expected to bring him, and every servant that entered the room was examined concerning his departure. At last the lady returned home, and was with great difficulty preserved from fits by spirits and cordials. The family was dispatched a thousand ways without success, and the house was filled with distraction, till, as we were deliberating what further measures to take, he returned from a petty gaming-table, with his coat torn and his head broken; without his sword, snuff-box, sleeve-buttons, and watch.

Of this loss or robbery, he gave little account: but, instead of sinking into his former shame, endeavoured to support himself by surliness and asperity. "He was not the first that had played away a few trifles, and of what use were birth and fortune if they would not admit some sallies and expenses?" His mamma was so much provoked by the cost of this prank, that she would neither palliate nor conceal it; and his father, after some threats of rustication which his fondness would not suffer him to execute, reduced the allowance of his pocket, that he might not be tempted by plenty to profusion. This method would have succeeded in a place where there are no panders to folly and extravagance, but was now likely to have produced pernicious consequences; for we have discovered a treaty with a broker, whose daughter he seems disposed to marry, on condition that he shall be supplied with present money, for which he is to repay thrice the value at the death of his father.

There was now no time to be lost. A domestic consultation was immediately held, and he was doomed to pass two years in the country; but his mother, touched with his tears,

declared that she thought him too much of a man to be any longer confined to his book, and he therefore begins his travels to-morrow under a French governor.

I am, &c.
EUMATHES.

No. 196. SATURDAY, February 1, 1752.

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt.——— HOR.

The blessings flowing in with life's full tide
Down with our ebb of life decreasing glide. FRANCIS.

BAXTER, in the narrative of his own life, has enumerated several opinions, which, though he thought them evident and incontestable at his first entrance into the world, time and experience disposed him to change.

Whoever reviews the state of his own mind from the dawn of manhood to its decline, and considers what he pursued or dreaded, slighted or esteemed, at different periods of his age, will have no reason to imagine such changes of sentiment peculiar to any station or character. Every man, however careless and inattentive, has conviction forced upon him; the lectures of time obtrude themselves upon the most unwilling or dissipated auditor; and, by comparing our past with our present thoughts, we perceive that we have changed our minds, though perhaps we cannot discover when the alteration happened, or by what causes it was produced.

This revolution of sentiments occasions a perpetual contest between the old and young. They who imagine themselves entitled to veneration by the prerogative of longer life, are inclined to treat the notions of those whose conduct they superintend with superciliousness and contempt, for want of considering that the future and the past have different appearances; that the disproportion will always be great between expectation and enjoyment; between new possession and satiety; that the truth of many maxims of age gives too little pleasure to be allowed till it is felt; and that the miseries of life would be encreased beyond all human power of endurance, if we were to enter the world with the same opinions as we carry from it.

We naturally indulge those ideas that please us. Hope will predominate in every mind, till it has been suppressed by frequent disappointments. The youth has not yet discovered

how many evils are continually hovering about us, and when he is set free from the shackles of discipline, looks abroad into the world with rapture; he sees an elysian region open before him, so variegated with beauty, and so stored with pleasure, that his care is rather to accumulate good, than to shun evil; he stands distracted by different forms of delight, and has no other doubt than which path to follow of those which all lead equally to the bowers of happiness.

He who has seen only the superficies of life believes every thing to be what it appears, and rarely suspects that external splendour conceals any latent sorrow or vexation. He never imagines that there may be greatness without safety, affluence without content, jollity without friendship, and solitude without peace. He fancies himself permitted to cull the blessings of every condition, and to leave its inconveniencies to the idle and the ignorant. He is inclined to believe no man miserable but by his own fault, and seldom looks with much pity upon failings or miscarriages, because he thinks them willingly admitted, or negligently incurred.

It is impossible, without pity and contempt, to hear a youth of generous sentiments and warm imagination, declaring in the moment of openness and confidence, his designs and expectations; because long life is possible, he considers it as certain, and therefore promises himself all the changes of happiness, and provides gratifications for every desire. He is, for a time, to give himself wholly to frolic and diversion, to range the world in search of pleasure, to delight every eye, to gain every heart, and to be celebrated equally for his pleasing levities and solid attainments, his deep reflections and his sparkling repartees. He then elevates his views to nobler enjoyments, and finds all the scattered excellencies of the female world united in a woman, who prefers his addresses to wealth and titles; he is afterwards to engage in business, to dissipate difficulty, and overpower opposition; to climb by the mere force of merit, to fame and greatness; and reward all those who countenanced his rise, or paid due regard to his early excellence. At last he will retire in peace and honour; contract his views to domestic pleasures; form the manners of children like himself; observe how every year expands the beauty of his daughters, and how his sons catch ardour from their father's history; he will give laws to the neighbourhood; dictate axioms to posterity; and leave the world an example of wisdom and happiness.

With hopes like these, he sallies jocund into life; to little purpose is he told, that the condition of humanity admits no pure and unmingled happiness; that the exhuberate gaiety of

youth ends in poverty or disease; that uncommon qualifications and contrarieties of excellence, produce envy equally with applause; that, whatever admiration and fondness may promise him, he must marry a wife like the wives of others, with some virtues and some faults, and be as often disgusted by her vices, as delighted by her elegance; that if he adventures into the circle of action, he must expect to encounter men as artful, as daring, as resolute as himself; that of his children, some may be deformed, and others vicious; some may disgrace him by their follies, some offend him by their insolence, and some exhaust him by their profusion. He hears all this with obstinate incredulity, and wonders by what malignity old age is influenced, that it cannot forbear to fill his ears with predictions of misery.

Among other pleasing errours of young minds, is the opinion of their own importance. He that has not yet remarked how little attention his contemporaries can spare from their own affairs, conceives all eyes turned upon himself, and imagines every one that approaches him to be an enemy or a follower, an admirer or a spy. He therefore considers his fame as involved in the event of every action. Many of the virtues and vices of youth proceed from this quick sense of reputation. This it is that gives firmness and constancy, fidelity and disinterestedness, and it is this that kindles resentment for slight injures, and dictates all the principles of sanguinary honour.

But as time brings him forward into the world, he soon discovers that he only shares fame or reproach with innumerable partners; that he is left unmarked in the obscurity of the crowd; and that what he does, whether good or bad, soon gives way to new objects of regard. He then easily sets himself free from the anxieties of reputation, and considers praise or censure as a transient breath, which while he hears it, is passing away, without any lasting mischief or advantage.

In youth, it is common to measure right and wrong by the opinion of the world, and in age, to act without any measure but interest, and to lose shame without substituting virtue.

Such is the condition of life, that something is always wanting to happiness. In youth, we have warm hopes, which are soon blasted by rashness and negligence, and great designs, which are defeated by inexperience. In age we have knowledge and prudence without spirit to exert, or motives to prompt them; we are able to plan schemes, and regulate measures; but have not time remaining to bring them to completion.

No. 197. Tuesday, February 4, 1752.

Cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver? Mart.

Say, to what vulture's share this carcase falls? F. Lewis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I belong to an order of mankind, considerable at least for their number, to which your notice has never been formally extended, though equally entitled to regard with those triflers, who have hitherto supplied you with topics of amusement or instruction. I am, Mr. Rambler, a legacy-hunter; and, as every man is willing to think well of the tribe in which his name is registered, you will forgive my vanity, if I remind you that the legacy-hunter, however degraded by an ill-compounded appellation in our barbarous language, was known, as I am told, in ancient Rome, by the sonorous titles of *captator* and *hæredipeta*.

My father was an attorney in the country, who married his master's daughter in hopes of a fortune which he did not obtain, having been, as he afterwards discovered, chosen by her only because she had no better offer, and was afraid of service. I was the first offspring of a marriage, thus reciprocally fraudulent, and therefore could not be expected to inherit much dignity or generosity, and if I had them not from nature, was not likely ever to attain them; for, in the years which I spent at home, I never heard any reason for action or forbearance, but that we should gain money or lose it; nor was taught any other style of commendation, than that Mr. Sneaker is a warm man, Mr. Gripe has done his busines, and needs care for nobody.

My parents, though otherwise not great philosophers, knew the force of early education, and took care that the blank of my understanding should be filled with impressions of the value of money. My mother used, upon all occasions, to inculcate some salutary axioms, such as might incite me "to keep what I had, and get what I could; she informed me that we were in a world, where "all must catch that catch can; and I grew up, stored my memory with deeper observations; restrained me from the usual puerile expenses, by remarking that "many a little made a mickle; and when I envied the finery of any of my neighbours, told me that "brag was a good dog, but holdfast was a better."

I was soon sagacious enough to discover that I was not born to great wealth; and having heard no other name for

happiness, was sometimes inclined to repine at my condition. But my mother always relieved me by saying that there was money enough in the family, that "it was good to be of kin to means," that I had nothing to do but to please my friends, and I might come to hold up my head with the best, squire in the country.

These splendid expectations arose from our alliance to three persons of considerable fortune. My mother's aunt had attended on a lady, who, when she died, rewarded her officiousness and fidelity with a large legacy. My father had two relations, of whom one had broken his indentures and run to sea, from whence, after an absence of thirty years, he returned with ten thousand pounds; and the other had lured an heiress out of a window, who, dying of her first child, had left him her estate, on which he lived, without any other care than to collect his rents, and preserve from poachers that game which he could not kill himself.

These hoarders of money were visited and courted by all who had any pretence to approach them, and received presents and compliments from cousins who could scarcely tell the degree of their relation. But we had peculiar advantages, which encouraged us to hope, that we should by degrees supplant our competitors. My father, by his profession, made himself necessary in their affairs; for the sailor and the chambermaid, he inquired out mortgages and securities, and wrote bonds and contracts; and had endeared himself to the old woman, who once rashly lent an hundred pounds without consulting him, by informing her that her debtor was on the point of bankruptcy, and posting so expeditiously with an execution that all the other creditors were defrauded.

To the 'squire he was a kind of steward, and had distinguished himself in his office by his address in raising the rents, his inflexibility in distressing the tardy tenants, and his acuteness in setting the parish free from burdensome inhabitants, by shifting them off to some other settlement.

Business made frequent attendance necessary; trust soon produced intimacy; and success gave a claim to kindness; so that we had opportunity to practise all the arts of flattery and endearment. My mother, who could not support the thoughts of losing any thing, determined, that all their fortunes should centre in me; and, in the prosecution of her schemes, took care to inform me that *nothing cost less than good words*, and that it is comfortable to leap into an estate which another has got.

She trained me by these precepts to the utmost ductility of

obedience, and the closest attention to profit. At an age when other boys are sporting in the fields or murmuring in the school, I was contriving some new method of paying my court; inquiring the age of my future benefactors; or considering how I should employ their legacies.

If our eagerness of money could have been satisfied with the possessions of any one of my relations, they might perhaps have been obtained; but as it was impossible to be always present with all three, our competitors were busy to efface any trace of affection which we might have left behind; and since there was not, on any part, such superiority of merit as could enforce a constant and unshaken preference, whoever was the last that flattered or obliged had for a time the ascendant.

My relations maintained a regular exchange of courtesy, took care to miss no occasion of condolence or congratulation, and sent presents at stated times, but had in their hearts not much esteem for one another. The seaman looked with contempt upon the squire as a milksop and a landman, who had lived without knowing the points of the compass, or seeing any part of the world beyond the country town; and whenever they met, would talk of longitude and latitude, and circles and tropics, would scarcely tell him the hour without some mention of the horizon and meridian, nor show him the news without detecting his ignorance of the situation of other countries.

The squire considered the sailor as a rude uncultivated savage, with little more of human than his form, and diverted himself with his ignorance of all common objects and affairs; when he could persuade him to go into the field, he always exposed him to the sportsmen, by sending him to look for game in improper places; and once prevailed upon him to be present at the races, only that he might show the gentlemen how a sailor sat upon a horse.

The old gentlewoman thought herself wiser than both, for she lived with no servant but a maid, and saved her money. The others were indeed sufficiently frugal; but the squire could not live without dogs and horses, and the sailor never suffered the day to pass but over a bowl of punch, to which, as he was not critical in the choice of his company, every man was welcome that could roar out a catch, or tell a story.

All these, however, I was to please; an arduous task; but what will not youth and avarice undertake; I had an unresisting suppleness of temper, and an unsatiable wish for riches; I was perpetually instigated by the ambition of my

parents, and assisted occasionally by their instructions. What these advantages enabled me to perform, shall be told in the next letter of,

Yours, &c.
CAPTATOR.

No. 198. SATURDAY, February 8, 1752.

Nil mihi das vivus, dicis post fata daturum
Si non insanis, scis Maro, quid cupiam. MART.

You've told me, Maro, whilst you live,
You'd not a single penny give,
But that whene'er you chance to die,
You'd leave a handsome legacy;
You must be mad beyond redress,
If my next wish you cannot guess. F. LEWIS.

MR. RAMBLER.

SIR—You, who must have observed the inclination which almost every man, however unactive or insignificant, discovers of representing his life as distinguished by extraordinary events, will not wonder that Captator thinks his narrative important enough to be continued. Nothing is more common than for those to tease their companions with their history, who have neither done nor suffered any thing that can excite curiosity, or afford instruction.

As I was taught to flatter with the first essays of speech, and had very early lost every other passion in the desire of money, I began my pursuit with omens of success; for I divided my officiousness so judiciously among my relations, that I was equally the favourite of all. When any of them entered the door, I went to welcome him with raptures; when he went away, I hung down my head, and sometimes entreated to go with him with so much importunity, that I very narrowly escaped a consent which I dreaded in my heart. When at an annual entertainment they were all together, I had a harder task; but plied them so impartially with caresses, that none could charge me with neglect; and when they were wearied with my fondness and civilities, I was always dismissed with money to buy playthings.

Life cannot be kept at a stand; the years of innocence and prattle were soon at an end, and other qualifications were necessary to recommend me to continuance of kindness. It luckily happened that none of my friends had high notions

of book learning. The sailor hated to see tall boys shut up in a school, when they might more properly be seeing the world, and making their fortunes; and was of opinion that, when the first rules of arithmetic were known, all that was necessary to make a man complete might be learned on shipboard. The squire only insisted that so much scholarship was indispensably necessary as might confer ability to draw a lease and read the court hands; and the old chambermaid declared loudly her contempt of books, and her opinion that they only took the head off the main chance.

To unite as well as we could, all their systems, I was bred at home. Each was taught to believe that I followed his directions, and I gained likewise, as my mother observed, this advantage, that I was always in the way; for she had known many favourite children sent to schools or academies, and forgotten.

As I grew fitter to be trusted to my own discretion, I was often despatched upon various pretences to visit my relations, with directions from my parents how to ingratiate myself, and drive away competitors.

I was, from my infancy, considered by the sailor as a promising genius, because I liked punch better than wine; and I took care to improve this prepossession by continual inquiries about the art of navigation, the degree of heat and cold in different climates, the profits of trade, and the dangers of shipwreck. I admired the courage of the seamen, and gained his heart by importuning him for a recital of his adventures, and a sight of his foreign curiosities. I listened with an appearance of close attention to stories which I could already repeat, and at the close never failed to express my resolution to visit distant countries, and my contempt of the cowards and drones that spend all their lives in their native parish; though I had in reality no desire of any thing but money, nor ever felt the stimulations of curiosity or ardour of adventure, but would contentedly have passed the years of Nestor in receiving rents, and lending upon mortgages.

The squire I was able to please with less hypocrisy, for I really thought it pleasant enough to kill the game and eat it. Some arts of falsehood, however, the *hunger of gold* persuaded me to practise, by which, though no other mischief was produced, the purity of my thoughts was vitiated, and the reverence for truth gradually destroyed. I sometimes purchased fish, and pretended to have caught them. I hired the countrymen to show me partridges, and then gave my uncle intelligence of their haunt; I learned the seats of hares at night, and discovered them in the morning with a sagacity

that raised the wonder and envy of old sportsmen. One only obstruction to the advancement of my reputation I could never fully surmount; I was naturally a coward, and was therefore always left shamefully behind, when there was a necessity to leap a hedge, to swim a river, or force the horses to their utmost speed; but as these exigencies did not frequently happen, I maintained my honour with sufficient success, and was never left out of a hunting party.

The old chambermaid was not so certainly, nor so easily pleased, for she had no predominant passion but avarice, and was therefore cold and inaccessible. She had no conception of any virtue in a young man but that of saving his money. When she heard of my exploits in the field, she would shake her head, inquire how much I should be the richer for all my performances, and lament that such sums should be spent upon dogs and horses. If the sailor told her of my inclination to travel, she was sure there was no place like England, and could not imagine why any man that can live in his own country should leave it. This sullen and frigid being I found means, however, to propitiate by frequent commendations of frugality, and perpetual care to avoid expense.

From the sailor was our first and most considerable expectation; for he was richer than the chambermaid, and older than the squire. He was so awkward and bashful among women, that we concluded him secure from matrimony; and the noisy fondness with which he used to welcome me to his house, made us imagine that he would look out for no other heir, and that we had nothing to do but wait patiently for his death. But in the midst of our triumph, my uncle saluted us one morning with a cry of transport, and, clapping his hand hard on my shoulder, told me, I was a happy fellow to have a friend like him in the world, for he came to fit me out for a voyage with one of his old acquaintances. I turned pale, and trembled; my father told him that he believed my constitution not fitted to the sea; and my mother, bursting into tears, cried out that her heart would break if she lost me. All this had no effect; the sailor was wholly insusceptive of the softer passions, and without regard to tears or arguments, persisted in his resolution to make me a man.

We were obliged to comply in appearance, and preparations were accordingly made. I took leave of my friends with great alacrity, proclaimed the beneficence of my uncle with the highest strains of gratitude, and rejoiced at the opportunity now put into my hands of gratifying my thirst of knowledge. But a week before the day appointed for my departure I fell sick by my mother's direction, and refused all food but

what she privately brought me; whenever my uncle visited me I was lethargic or delirious, but took care in my raving fits to talk incessantly of travel and merchandise. The room was kept dark; the table was filled with vials and gallipots; my mother was with difficulty persuaded not to endanger her life with nocturnal attendance; my father lamented the loss of the profits of the voyage; and such superfluity of artifices was employed, as perhaps might have discovered the cheat to a man of penetration. But the sailor, unacquainted with subtilties and stratagems, was easily deluded; and as the ship could not stay for my recovery, sold the cargo, and left me to re-establish my health at leisure.

I was sent to regain my flesh in a purer air, lest it should appear never to have been wasted, and in two months returned to deplore my disappointment. My uncle pitied my dejection, and bid me prepare myself against next year, for no land-lubber should touch his money.

A reprieve however was obtained, and perhaps some new stratagem might have succeeded another spring; but my uncle unhappily made amorous advances to my mother's maid, who, to promote so advantageous a match, discovered the secret with which only she had been entrusted. He stormed, and raved, and declaring that he would have heirs of his own, and not give his substance to cheats and cowards, married the girl in two days, and has now four children.

Cowardice is always scorned, and deceit universally detested. I found my friends, if not wholly alienated, at least cooled in their affection; the squire, though he did not wholly discard me, was less fond, and often inquired when I would go to sea. I was obliged to bear his insults, and endeavoured to rekindle his kindness by assiduity and respect; but all my care was vain; he died without a will, and the estate devolved to the legal heir.

Thus has the folly of my parents condemned me to spend in flattery and attendance those years in which I might have been qualified to place myself above hope or fear. I am arrived at manhood without any useful art or generous sentiment; and, if the old woman should likewise at last deceive me, am in danger at once of beggary and ignorance.

I am, &c.

CAPTATOR.

No. 199. Tuesday, February 11, 1752.

Decolor, obscurus, vilis, non ille repexam
Cesariem regum, nec candida, virginis ornat
Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula moreu;
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
Tunc superat pulchros cultus, et quicquid Eois
Indus littoribus rubra scrutatur in alga. Claudianus.

Obscure, unpris'd, and dark, the magnet lies,
Nor lures the search of avaricious eyes,
Nor binds the neck, nor sparkles in the hair,
Nor dignifies the great, nor decks the fair.
But search the wonders of the dusky stone,
And own all glories of the mine outdone,
Each grace of form, each ornament of state,
That decks the fair, or dignifies the great.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Though you have seldom digressed from moral subjects, I suppose you are not so rigorous or cynical as to deny the value or usefulness of natural philosophy; or to have lived in this age of inquiry and experiment, without any attention to the wonders every day produced by the pokers of magnetism and the wheels of electricity. At least, I may be allowed to hope that, since nothing is more contrary to moral excellence than envy, you will not refuse to promote the happiness of others, merely because you cannot partake of their enjoyments.

In confidence, therefore, that your ignorance has not made you an enemy to knowledge, I offer you the honour of introducing to the notice of the public an adept, who, having long laboured for the benefit of mankind, is not willing like too many of his predecessors, to conceal his secrets in the grave.

Many have signalized themselves by melting their estates in crucibles. I was born to no fortune, and therefore had only my mind and body to devote to knowledge, and the gratitude of posterity will attest, that neither mind nor body has been spared. I have sat whole weeks without sleep by the side of an athanor, to watch the moment of projection; I have made the first experiment in nineteen diving-engines of new construction; I have fallen eleven times speechless under the shock of electricity; I have twice dislocated my limbs, and once fractured my skull, in essaying to fly,* and four

* It is said that Dr. Johnson once lodged in the same house with a man who broke his legs in attempting to fly. C

times endangered my life by submitting to the transfusion of blood.

In the first period of my studies, I exerted the powers of my body more than those of my mind, and was not without hopes that fame might be purchased by a few broken bones without the toil of thinking; but having been shattered by some violent experiments, and constrained to confine myself to my books, I passed six-and-thirty years in searching the treasures of ancient wisdom, but am at last amply recompensed for all my perseverance.

The curiosity of the present race of philosophers, having been long exercised upon electricity, has been lately transformed to magnetism; the qualities of the loadstone have been investigated, if not with much advantage, yet with great applause; and as the highest praise of art is to imitate nature, I hope no man will think the makers of artificial magnets celebrated or reverenced above their deserts.

I have for some time employed myself in the same practice, but with deeper knowledge and more extensive views. While my contemporaries were touching needles and raising weights, or busying themselves with inclination and variation, I have been examining those qualities of magnetism which may be applied to the accommodation and happiness of common life. I have left to inferior understandings the care of conducting the sailor through the hazards of the ocean, and reserved to myself the more difficult and illustrious province of preserving the connubial compact from violation, and setting mankind free for ever from the danger of supposititious children, and the torments of fruitless vigilance and anxious suspicion.

To defraud any man of his due praise is unworthy of a philosopher; I shall therefore openly confess, that I owe the first hint of this inestimable secret to the rabbi Abraham Ben Hannase, who, in his treatise of precious stones, has left this account of the magnet; חקאלאכיתא, &c. "The calamita, or loadstone that attracts iron, produces many bad fantasies in man. Women fly from this stone. If therefore any husband be disturbed with jealousy, and fear lest his wife converses with other men, let him lay this stone upon her while she is asleep. If she be pure, she will, when she wakes, clasp her husband fondly in her arms; but if she be guilty, she will fall out of bed, and run away."

When I first read this wonderful passage, I could not easily conceive why it had remained hitherto unregarded in such a zealous competition for magnetical fame. It would surely be unjust to suspect that any of the candidates are strangers to the name or works of rabbi Abraham, or to conclude, from a

late edict of the royal society in favour of the English language, that philosophy and literature are no longer to act in concert. Yet, how should a quality so useful escape promulgation, but by the obscurity of the language in which it was delivered? Why are footmen and chambermaids paid on every side for keeping secrets, which no caution nor expense could secure from the all-penetrating magnet? or, Why are so many witnesses summoned, and so many artifices practised, to discover what so easy an experiment would infallibly reveal?

Full of this perplexity I read the lines of Abraham to a friend, who advised me not to expose my life by a mad indulgence of the love of fame; he warned me, by the fate of Orpheus, that knowledge or genius could give no protection to the invader of female prerogatives; assured me that neither the armour of Achilles, nor the antidote of Mithridates, would be able to preserve me; and counselled me, if I could not live without renown, to attempt the acquisition of universal empire, in which the honour would perhaps be equal, and the danger certainly be less.

I, a solitary student, pretend not to much knowledge of the world, but am unwilling to think it so generally corrupt, as that a scheme for the detection of incontinence should bring any danger upon its inventor. My friend has indeed told me that all the women will be my enemies, and that, however I flatter myself with hopes of defence from the men, I shall certainly find myself deserted in the hour of danger. Of the young men, said he, some will be afraid of sharing the disgrace of their mothers, and some the danger of their mistresses; of those who are married, part are already convinced of the falsehood of their wives, and part shut their eyes to avoid conviction; few ever sought for virtue in marriage, and therefore few will try whether they have found it. Almost every man is careless or timorous, and to trust is easier and safer than to examine.

These observations discouraged me, till I began to consider what reception I was likely to find among the ladies, whom I have reviewed under the three classes of maids, wives, and widows, and cannot but hope that I may obtain some countenance among them. The single ladies I suppose universally ready to patronise my method, by which connubial wickedness may be detected, since no woman marries with a previous design to be unfaithful to her husband. And, to keep them steady in my cause, I promise never to sell one of my magnets to a man who steals a girl from school, marries a woman forty years younger than himself, or employs

the authority of parents to obtain a wife without her own consent.

Among the married ladies, notwithstanding the insinuations of slander, yet I resolve to believe that the greater part are my friends, and am at least convinced, that they who demand the test, and appear on my side, will supply by their spirit the deficiency of their numbers, and that their enemies will shrink and quake at the sight of a magnet, as the slaves of Scythia fled from the scourge.

The widows will be confederated in my favour by their curiosity, if not by their virtue; for it may be observed, that women who have outlived their husbands always think themselves entitled to superintend the conduct of young wives; and as they are themselves in no danger from this magnetic trial, I shall expect them to be eminently and unanimously zealous in recommending it.

With these hopes I shall, in a short time, offer to sale magnets armed with a particular metallic composition, which concentrates their virtue, and determines their agency. It is known that the efficacy of the magnet, in common operations, depends much upon its armature; and it cannot be imagined that a stone, naked, or cased only in the common manner, will discover the virtues ascribed to it by rabbi Abraham. The secret of this metal I shall carefully conceal, and, therefore, am not afraid of imitators, nor shall trouble the offices with solicitations for a patent.

I shall sell them of different sizes, and various degrees of strength. I have some of a bulk proper to be hung at the bed's head, as scare-crows, and some so small that they may be easily concealed. Some I have ground into oval forms to be hung at watches; and some, for the curious, I have set in wedding rings, that ladies may never want an attestation of their innocence. Some I can produce so sluggish and inert, that they will not act before the third failure; and others so vigorous and animated, that they exert their influence against unlawful wishes, if they have been willingly and deliberately indulged. As it is my practice honestly to tell my customers the properties of my magnets, I can judge, by their choice, of the delicacy of their sentiments. Many have been content to spare cost by purchasing only the lowest degree of efficacy, and all have started with terrour from those which operate upon the thoughts. One young lady only fitted on a ring of the strongest energy, and declared

that she scorned to separate her wishes from her acts, or allow herself to think what she was forbidden to practise.

I am, &c.

HERMETIOUS.

No. 200. SATURDAY, February 15, 1752.

Nemo petit modicis quæ mittebantur amicis
A Seneca, quæ Piso bonus, quæ Cotta solebat
Largiri, nempe et titulis et fascibus olim
Major habebatur donandi gloria; solum
Poscimus ut cœnes civiliter; hoc face, et esto,
Esto, ut nunc multi, dives tibi, pauper amicis. JUV.

No man expects (for who so much a sot
Who has the times he lives in so forgot?)
What Seneca, what Piso us'd to send
To raise or to support a sinking friend.
Those godlike men, to wanting virtue kind,
Bounty well plac'd, preferr'd, and well design'd,
To all their titles, all that height of pow'r
Which turns the brains of fools, and fools alone adore.
When your poor client is condemn'd t' attend,
'Tis all we ask, receive him as a friend:
Descend to this, and then we ask no more;
Rich to yourself, to all beside be poor. BOWLES.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER—Such is the tenderness or infirmity of many minds that, when any affliction oppresses them, they have immediate recourse to lamentation and complaint, which, though it can only be allowed reasonable when evils admit of remedy, and then only when addressed to those from whom the remedy is expected, yet seems even in hopeless and incurable distresses to be natural, since those by whom it is not indulged, imagine that they give a proof of extraordinary fortitude by suppressing it.

I am one of those, who, with the Sancho of Cervantes, leave to higher characters the merit of suffering in silence, and give vent, without scruple, to any sorrow that swells in my heart. It is therefore to me a severe aggravation of a calamity, when it is such as in the common opinion will not justify the acerbity of exclamation, or support the solemnity of vocal grief. Yet many pains are incident to a man of delicacy, which the unfeeling world cannot be persuaded to pity, and which, when they are separated from their peculiar and

personal circumstances, will never be considered as important enough to claim attention, or deserve redress.

Of this kind will appear, to gross and vulgar apprehensions the miseries which I endured in a morning visit to Prospero, a man lately raised to wealth by a lucky project, and too much intoxicated by sudden elevation, or too little polished by thought and conversation, to enjoy his present fortune with elegance and decency.

We set out in the world together; and for a long time mutually assisted each other in our exigencies, as either happened to have money or influence beyond his immediate necessities. You know that nothing generally endears men so much as participation of dangers and misfortunes; I therefore always considered Prospero as united with me in the strongest league of kindness, and imagined that our friendship was only to be broken by the hand of death. I felt, at his sudden shoot of success, an honest and disinterested joy; but, as I want no part of his superfluities, am not willing to descend from that equality in which we hitherto have lived.

Our intimacy was regarded by me as a dispensation from ceremonial visits; and it was so long before I saw him at his new house, that he gently complained of my neglect, and obliged me to come on a day appointed. I kept my promise, but found that the impatience of my friend arose not from any desire to communicate his happiness, but to enjoy his superiority.

When I told my name at the door, the footman went to see if his master was at home, and by the tardiness of his return, gave me reason to suspect that time was taken to deliberate. He then informed me that Prospero desired my company, and showed the staircase, carefully secured by mats from the pollution of my feet. The best apartments were ostentatiously set open, that I might have a distant view of the magnificence which I was not permitted to approach; and my old friend, receiving me with all the insolence of condescension at the top of the stairs, conducted me to a back room, where he told me he always breakfasted when he had not great company.

On the floor where we sat lay a carpet covered with a cloth, of which Prospero ordered his servant to lift up a corner, that I might contemplate the brightness of the colours, and the elegance of the texture, and asked me whether I had ever seen any thing so fine before. I did not gratify his folly by any outcries of admiration, but coldly bade the footman let down the cloth.

We then sat down, and I began to hope that pride was glutted with persecution, when Prospero desired that I would

give the servant leave to adjust the cover of my chair, which was slipt a little aside, to show the damask; he informed me that he had bespoke ordinary chairs for common use, but had been disappointed by his tradesman. I put the chair aside with my foot, and drew another so hastily, that I was entreated not to rumple the carpet.

Breakfast was at last set; and as I was not willing to indulge the peevishness that began to seize me, I commended the tea. Prospero then told me, that another time I should taste his finest sort, but that he had only a very small quantity remaining, and reserved it for those whom he thought himself obliged to treat with particular respect.

While we were conversing upon such subjects as imagination happened to suggest, he frequently digressed into directions to the servant that waited, or made a slight inquiry after the jeweller or silversmith; and once, as I was pursuing an argument with some degree of earnestness, he started from his posture of attention, and ordered, that if lord Lofty called on him that morning, he should be shown into the best parlour.

My patience was not yet wholly subdued. I was willing to promote his satisfaction, and therefore observed that the figures on the china were eminently pretty. Prospero had now an opportunity of calling for his Dresden china, which, says he, I always associate with my chased tea-kettle. The cups were brought; I once resolved not to have looked upon them, but my curiosity prevailed. When I had examined them a little, Prospero desired me to set them down, for they who were accustomed only to common dishes seldom handled china with much care. You will, I hope, commend my philosophy, when I tell you that I did not dash his baubles to the ground.

He was now so much elevated with his own greatness, that he thought some humility necessary to avert the glance of envy; and therefore told me, with an air of soft composure, that I was not to estimate life by external appearance, that all these shining acquisitions had added little to his happiness, that he still remembered with pleasure the days in which he and I were upon the level, and had often, in the moment of reflection, been doubtful whether he should lose much by changing his condition for mine.

I now began to be afraid lest his pride should, by silence and submission, be emboldened to insults that could not easily be born, and therefore coolly considered how I should repress it without such bitterness of reproof as I was yet unwilling to use. But he interrupted my meditation, by asking leave

to be dressed, and told me, that he had promised to attend some ladies in the Park, and, if I was going the same way, would take me in his chariot. I had no inclination to any other favours, and therefore left him without any intention of seeing him again, unless some misfortune should restore his understanding.

I am, &c.

ASPER.

Though I am not wholly insensible of the provocations which my correspondent has received, I cannot altogether commend the keenness of his resentment, nor encourage him to persist in his resolution of breaking off all commerce with his old acquaintance. One of the golden precepts of Pythagoras directs, that *a friend should not be hated for little faults;* and surely he, upon whom nothing worse can be charged, than that he mats his stairs, and covers his carpet, and sets out his finery to show before those whom he does not admit to use it, has yet committed nothing that should exclude him from common degrees of kindness. Such improprieties often proceed rather from stupidity than malice. Those who thus shine only to dazzle, are influenced merely by custom and example, and neither examine, nor are qualified to examine, the motives of their own practice, or to state the nice limits between elegance and ostentation. They are often innocent of the pain which their vanity produces, and insult others when they have no worse purpose than to please themselves.

He that too much refines his delicacy will always endanger his quiet. Of those with whom nature and virtue oblige us to converse, some are ignorant of the art of pleasing, and offend when they design to caress; some are negligent, and gratify themselves without regard to the quiet of another; some perhaps are malicious, and feel no greater satisfaction in prosperity than that of raising envy and trampling inferiority. But, whatever be the motive of insult, it is always best to overlook it; for folly scarcely can deserve resentment, and malice is punished by neglect.*

* The character of Prospero, it is universally acknowledged, was intended for Garrick, who, says Mr. Boswell, "never entirely forgave its pointed satire."

No. 201. Tuesday, February 18, 1752.

——Sanctus haberi
Promissique tenax dictis fatisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem. Juv.

Convince the world that you're devout and true;
Be just in all you say, and all you do:
Whatever be your birth, you're sure to be
A peer of the first magnitude to me. Stepney.

Boyle has observed, that the excellency of manufactures and the facility of labour would be much promoted if the various expedients and contrivances which lay concealed in private hands, were by reciprocal communications made generally known; for there are few operations that are not performed by one or other with some peculiar advantages, which, though singly of little importance, would, by conjunction and concurrence, open new inlets to knowledge, and give new powers to diligence.

There are, in like manner, several moral excellencies distributed among the different classes of a community. It was said by Cujacius, that he never read more than one book by which he was not instructed; and he that shall inquire after virtue with ardour and attention, will seldom find a man by whose example or sentiments he may not be improved.

Every profession has some essential and appropriate virtue, without which there can be no hope of honour or success, and which, as it is more or less cultivated, confers within its sphere of activity different degrees of merit and reputation. As the astrologers range the subdivisions of mankind under the planets which they suppose to influence their lives, the moralists may distribute them according to the virtues which they necessarily practise, and consider them as distinguished by prudence or fortitude, diligence or patience.

So much are the modes of excellence settled by time and place, that men may be heard boasting in one street of that which they would anxiously conceal in another. The grounds of scorn and esteem, the topics of praise and satire, are varied according to the several virtues or vices which the course of life has disposed men to admire or abhor; but he who is solicitous for his own improvement must not be limited by local reputation, but select from every tribe of mortals their characteristical virtues, and constellate in himself the scattered graces which shine single in other men.

The chief praise to which a trader aspires is that of punctu-

ality, or an exact and rigorous observance of commercial engagements; nor is there any vice of which he so much dreads the imputation, as of negligence and instability. This is a quality which the interest of mankind requires to be diffused through all the ranks of life, but which many seem to consider as a vulgar and ignoble virtue, below the ambition of greatness or attention of wit, scarcely requisite among men of gaiety and spirit, and sold at its highest rate when it is sacrificed to a frolic or a jest.

Every man has daily occasion to remark what vexations arise from this privilege of deceiving one another. The active and vivacious have so long disdained the restraints of truth, that promises and appointments have lost their cogency, and both parties neglect their stipulations, because each concludes that they will be broken by the other.

Negligence is first admitted in small affairs, and strengthened by petty indulgences. He that is not yet hardened by custom, ventures not on the violation of important engagements, but thinks himself bound by his word in cases of property or danger, though he allows himself to forget at what time he is to meet ladies in the Park, or at what tavern his friends are expecting him.

This laxity of honour would be more tolerable, if it could be restrained to the play-house, the ball-room, or the card-table; yet even there it is sufficiently troublesome, and darkens those moments with expectation, suspense, and resentment, which are set aside for pleasure, and from which we naturally hope for unmingled enjoyment and total relaxation. But he that suffers the slightest breach in his morality can seldom tell what shall enter it, or how wide it shall be made; when a passage is open, the influx of corruption is every moment wearing down opposition, and by slow degrees deluges the heart.

Aliger entered the world a youth of lively imagination, extensive views, and untainted principles. His curiosity incited him to range from place to place, and try all the varieties of conversation; his elegance of address and fertility of ideas gained him friends wherever he appeared; or at least he found the general kindness of reception always shown to a young man whose birth and fortune gave him a claim to notice, and who has neither by vice or folly destroyed his privileges. Aliger was pleased with this general smile of mankind, and was industrious to preserve it by compliance and officiousness, but did not suffer his desire of pleasing to vitiate his integrity. It was his established maxim, that a promise is never to be broken; nor was it without long

reluctance that he once suffered himself to be drawn away from a festal engagement by the importunity of another company.

He spent the evening, as is usual in the rudiments of vice, in perturbation and imperfect enjoyment, and met his disappointed friends in the morning with confusion and excuses. His companions, not accustomed to such scrupulous anxiety, laughed at his uneasiness, compounded the offence for a bottle, gave him courage to break his word again, and again levied the penalty. He ventured the same experiment upon another society, and found them equally ready to consider it as a venial fault, always incident to a man of quickness and gaiety; till, by degrees, he began to think himself at liberty to follow the last invitation, and was no longer shocked at the turpitude of falsehood. He made no difficulty to promise his presence at distant places; and, if listlessness happened to creep upon him, would sit at home with great tranquillity, and has often sunk to sleep in a chair, while he held tea tables in continual expectations of his entrance.

It was so pleasant to live in perpetual vacancy, that he soon dismissed his attention as an useless incumbrance, and resigned himself to carelessness and dissipation, without any regard to the future or the past, or any other motives of action than the impulse of a sudden desire, or the attraction of immediate pleasure. The absent were immediately forgotten, and the hopes or fears felt by others had no influence upon his conduct. He was in speculation completely just, but never kept his promise to a creditor; he was benevolent, but always deceived those friends whom he undertook to patronize or assist; he was prudent, but suffered his affairs to be embarrassed for want of regulating his accounts at stated times. He courted a young lady, and, when the settlements were drawn, took a ramble into the country on the day appointed to sign them. He resolved to travel, and sent his chests on ship-board, but delayed to follow them till he lost his passage. He was summoned as an evidence in a cause of great importance, and loitered on the way till the trial was past. It is said that when he had, with great expense, formed an interest in a borough, his opponent contrived, by some agents who knew his temper, to lure him away on the day of election.

His benevolence draws him into the commission of a thousand crimes, which others less kind or civil would escape. His courtesy invites application; his promises produce dependence; he has his pockets filled with petitions, which he intends some time to deliver and enforce, and his table

covered with letters of request, with which he purposes to comply; but time slips imperceptibly away, while he is either idle or busy; his friends lose their opportunities, and charge upon him their miscarriages and calamities.

This character, however contemptible, is not peculiar to Aliger. They whose activity of imagination is often shifting the scenes of expectation, are frequently subject to such sallies of caprice as make all their actions fortuitous, destroy the value of their friendship, obstruct the efficacy of their virtues, and set them below the meanest of those that persist in their resolutions, execute what they design, and perform what they have promised.

No. 202. Saturday, February 22, 1752.

Προς ἅπαντα δειλος ἐστιν ὁ πενης πράγματα,
Καὶ πάντας ἀυτῳ καταφρονειν ὑπολαμβάνει.
Ὁ δὲ μετρίως πράττων περισκελέστερον
Απαντα τ' ἀνιαρα, Δαμπρία, φέρει. Callimachus.

From no affliction is the poor exempt;
He thinks each eye surveys him with contempt:
Unmanly poverty subdues the heart,
Cankers each wound, and sharpens ev'ry dart. F. Lewis.

Among those who have endeavoured to promote learning, and rectify judgment, it has been long customary to complain of the abuse of words, which are often admitted to signify things so different, that, instead of assisting the understanding as vehicles of knowledge, they produce errour, dissension, and perplexity, because what is affirmed in one sense is received in another.

If this ambiguity sometimes embarrasses the most solemn controversies, and obscures the demonstrations of science, it may well be expected to infest the pompous periods of declaimers, whose purpose is often only to amuse with fallacies, and change the colours of truth and falsehood; or the musical compositions of poets, whose style is professedly figurative, and whose heart is imagined to consist in distorting words from their original meaning.

There are few words of which the reader believes himself better to know the import than of *poverty*; yet, whoever studies either the poets or philosophers, will find such an account of the condition expressed by that term as his experience or

observation will not easily discover to be true. Instead of the meanness, distress, complaint, anxiety, and dependence, which have hitherto been combined in his ideas of poverty, he will read of content, innocence, and cheerfulness, of health and safety, tranquillity and freedom; of pleasures not known but to men unencumbered with possession; and of sleep that sheds his balsamic anodynes only on the cottage. Such are the blessings to be obtained by the resignation of riches, that kings might descend from their thrones, and generals retire from a triumph, only to slumber undisturbed in the elysium of poverty.

If these authors do not deceive us, nothing can be more absurd than that perpetual contest for wealth which keeps the world in commotion; nor any complaints more justly censured than those which proceed from want of the gifts of fortune, which we are taught by the great masters of moral wisdom to consider as golden shackles, by which the wearer is at once disabled and adorned; as luscious poisons, which may for a time please the palate, but soon betray their malignity by languor and by pain.

It is the great privilege of poverty to be happy unenvied, to be healthful without physic, and secure without a guard; to obtain from the bounty of nature what the great and wealthy are compelled to procure by the help of artists and attendants, of flatterers and spies.

But it will be found upon a nearer view, that they who extol the happiness of poverty, do not mean the same state with those who deplore its miseries. Poets have their imaginations filled with ideas of magnificence; and being accustomed to contemplate the downfall of empires, or to contrive forms of lamentations for monarchs in distress, rank all the classes of mankind in a state of poverty who make no approaches to the dignity of crowns. To be poor, in the epic language, is only not to command the wealth of nations, nor to have fleets and armies in pay.

Vanity has perhaps contributed to this impropriety of style. He that wishes to become a philosopher at a cheap rate, easily gratifies his ambition by submitting to poverty when he does not feel it, and by boasting his contempt of riches when he has already more than he enjoys. He who would show the extent of his views, and grandeur of his conceptions, or discover his acquaintance with splendour and magnificence, may talk, like Cowley, of an humble station and quiet obscurity, of the paucity of nature's wants, and the inconveniencies of superfluity, and at last, like him, limit his desires to five hundred pounds a year; a fortune, indeed, not exuberant, when

we compare it with the expenses of pride and luxury, but to which it little becomes a philosopher to affix the name of poverty, since no man can, with any propriety, be termed poor, who does not see the greater part of mankind richer than himself.

As little is the general condition of human life understood by the panegyrists and historians, who amuse us with accounts of the poverty of heroes and sages. Riches are of no value in themselves, their use is discovered only in that which they procure. They are not coveted, unless by narrow understandings, which confound the means with the end, but for the sake of power, influence, and esteem; or, by some of less elevated and refined sentiments, as necessary to sensual enjoyment.

The pleasures of luxury many have, without uncommon virtue, been able to despise, even when affluence and idleness have concurred to tempt them; and therefore he who feels nothing from indigence but the want of gratifications which he could not in any other condition make consistent with innocence, has given no proof of eminent patience. Esteem and influence every man desires, but they are equally pleasing, and equally valuable, by whatever means they are obtained; and whoever has found the art of securing them without the help of money, ought, in reality, to be accounted rich, since he has all that riches can purchase to a wise man. Cincinnatus, though he lived upon a few acres cultivated by his own hand, was sufficiently removed from all the evils generally comprehended under the name of poverty, when his reputation was such, that the voice of his country called him from his farm to take absolute command into his hand; nor was Diogenes much mortified by his residence in a tub, where he was honoured with the visit of Alexander the Great.

The same fallacy has conciliated veneration to the religious orders. When we behold a man abdicating the hope of terrestrial possessions, and precluding himself, by an irrevocable vow, from the pursuit and acquisition of all that his fellow-beings consider as worthy of wishes and endeavours, we are immediately struck with the purity, abstraction and firmness of his mind, and regard him as wholly employed in securing the interests of futurity, and devoid of any other care than to gain at whatever price the surest passage to eternal rest.

Yet, what can the votary be justly said to have lost of his present happiness? If he resides in a convent, he converses only with men whose condition is the same with his own; he has, from the munificence of the founder, all the necessaries

of life, and is safe from that *destitution which* Hooker declares to be *such an impediment to virtue, as, till it be removed, suffereth not the mind of man to admit any other care.* All temptations to envy and competition are shut out from his retreat; he is not pained with the sight of unattainable dignity, nor insulted with the bluster of insolence, or the smile of forced familiarity. If he wanders abroad, the sanctity of his character amply compensates all other distinctions; he is seldom seen but with reverence, nor heard but with submission.

It has been remarked, that death, though often defied in the field, seldom fails to terrify when it approaches the bed of sickness in its natural horrour; so poverty may easily be endured while associated with dignity and reputation, but will always be shunned and dreaded, when it is accompanied with ignominy and contempt.

No. 203. Tuesday, February 25, 1752.

Cum volet illa dies, quæ nil nisi corporis hujus
Jus habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat ævi. Ovid.

Come, soon or late, death's undetermin'd day,
This mortal being only can decay. Welsted.

It seems to be the fate of man to seek all his consolations in futurity. The time present is seldom able to fill desire or imagination with immediate enjoyment, and we are forced to supply its deficiencies by recollection or anticipation.

Every one has so often detected the fallaciousness of hope, and the inconvenience of teaching himself to expect what a thousand accidents may preclude, that, when time has abated the confidence with which youth rushes out to take possession of the world, we endeavour, or wish, to find entertainment in the review of life, and to repose upon real facts and certain experience. This is perhaps one reason, among many, why age delights in narratives.

But so full is the world of calamity, that every source of pleasure is polluted, and every retirement of tranquillity disturbed. When time has supplied us with events sufficient to employ our thoughts, it has mingled them with so many disasters, that we shrink from their remembrance, dread their

intrusion upon our minds, and fly from them as from enemies that pursue us with torture.

No man past the middle point of life can sit down to feast upon the pleasures of youth without finding the banquet embittered by the cup of sorrow; he may revive lucky accidents and pleasing extravagancies; many days of harmless frolic, or nights of honest festivity, will perhaps recur; or, if he has been engaged in scenes of action, and acquainted with affairs of difficulty and vicissitudes of fortune, he may enjoy the nobler pleasure of looking back upon distress firmly supported, dangers resolutely encountered, and opposition artfully defeated. Æneas properly comforts his companions, when, after the horrours of a storm, they have landed on an unknown and desolate country, with the hope that their miseries will be at some distant time recounted with delight. There are few higher gratifications than that of reflection on surmounted evils, when they were not incurred nor protracted by our fault, and neither reproach us with cowardice nor guilt.

But this felicity is almost always abated by the reflection, that they with whom we should be most pleased to share it are now in the grave. A few years make such havoc in human generations, that we soon see ourselves deprived of those with whom we entered the world, and whom the participation of pleasures or fatigues had endeared to our remembrance. The man of enterprise recounts his adventures and expedients, but is forced, at the close of the relation, to pay a sigh to the names of those that contributed to his success; he that passes his life among the gayer part of mankind, has his remembrance stored with remarks and repartees of wits, whose sprightliness and merriment are now lost in perpetual silence; the trader, whose industry has supplied the want of inheritance, repines in solitary plenty at the absence of companions with whom he had planned out amusements for his latter years; and the scholar, whose merit, after a long series of efforts, raises him from obscurity, looks round in vain from his exaltation for his old friends, or enemies, whose applause or mortification would heighten his triumph.

Among Martial's requisites to happiness is, *Res non parta labore, sed relicta*, An estate not gained by industry, but left by inheritance. It is necessary to the completion of every good, that it be timely obtained; for whatever comes at the close of life will come too late to give much delight. Yet all human happiness has its defects: of what we do not gain for ourselves we have only a faint and imperfect fruition, because we cannot compare the difference between want and posses-

sion, or at least can derive from it no conviction of our own abilities, nor any increase of self-esteem. What we acquire by bravery or science, by mental or corporal diligence, comes at last when we cannot communicate, and therefore cannot enjoy it.

Thus every period of life is obliged to borrow its happiness from the time to come. In youth we have nothing past to entertain us, and in age we derive little from retrospect but hopeless sorrow. Yet the future likewise has its limits, which the imagination dreads to approach, but which we see to be not far distant. The loss of our friends and companions impresses hourly upon us the necessity of our own departure: we know that the schemes of man are quickly at an end, that we must soon lie down in the grave with the forgotten multitudes of former ages, and yield our place to others, who, like us, shall be driven a while, by hope or fear, about the surface of the earth, and then like us be lost in the shades of death.

Beyond this termination of our material existence we are therefore obliged to extend our hopes; and almost every man indulges his imagination with something, which is not to happen till he has changed his manner of being: some amuse themselves with entails and settlements, provide for the perpetuation of families and honours, or contrive to obviate the dissipation of the fortunes which it has been their business to accumulate; others, more refined or exalted, congratulate their own hearts upon the future extent of their reputation, the reverence of distant nations, and the gratitude of unprejudiced posterity.

They whose souls are so chained down to coffers and tenements, that they cannot conceive a state in which they shall look upon them with less solicitude, are seldom attentive or flexible to arguments: but the votaries of fame are capable of reflection, and therefore may be called to reconsider the probability of their expectations.

Whether to be remembered in remote times be worthy of a wise man's wish, has not yet been satisfactorily decided; and, indeed, to be long remembered, can happen to so small a number, that the bulk of mankind has very little interest in the question. There is never room in the world for more than a certain quantity or measure of renown. The necessary business of life, the immediate pleasures or pains of every condition, leave us not leisure beyond a fixed proportion for contemplations which do not forcibly influence our present welfare. When this vacuity is filled, no characters can be admitted into the circulation of fame, but by occupying the place of some that must be thrust into oblivion. The eye of the mind, like

that of the body, can only extend its view to new objects, by losing sight of those which are now before it.

Reputation is therefore a meteor, which blazes a while and disappears for ever: and, if we except a few transcendent and invincible names, which no revolutions of opinion or length of time are able to suppress; all those that engage our thoughts, or diversify our conversation, are every moment hasting to obscurity, as new favourites are adopted by fashion.

It is not therefore from this world that any ray of comfort can proceed, to cheer the gloom of the last hour. But futurity has still its prospects: there is yet happiness in reserve, which, if we transfer our attention to it, will support us in the pains of disease and the languor of decay. This happiness we may expect with confidence, because it is out of the power of chance, and may be attained by all that sincerely desire and earnestly pursue it. On this therefore every mind ought finally to rest. Hope is the chief blessing of man, and that hope only is rational, of which we are certain that it cannot deceive us.

No. 204. Saturday, February 29, 1752.

Nemo tam dives habuit faventes,
Crastinum ut posset sibi polliceri. — Seneca.

Of heav'n's protection who can be
So confident to utter this?—
To-morrow I will spend in bliss. — F. Lewis.

Seged, lord of Ethiopia, to the inhabitants of the world: To the sons of *presumption*, humility and fear; and to the daughters of *sorrow*, content and acquiescence.

Thus, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign spoke Seged, the monarch of forty nations, the distributor of the waters of the Nile: "At length, Seged, thy toils are at an end; thou hast reconciled disaffection, thou hast suppressed rebellion, thou hast pacified the jealousies of thy courtiers, thou hast chased war from thy confines, and erected fortresses in the lands of thy enemies. All who have offended thee tremble in thy presence, and wherever thy voice is heard it is obeyed. Thy throne is surrounded by armies, numerous as the locusts of the summer, and resistless as the blasts of pestilence. Thy magazines are stored with ammunition, thy treasures overflow with the tribute of conquered kingdoms. Plenty waves upon thy fields, and opulence glitters in thy cities. Thy nod

is as the earthquake that shakes the mountains, and thy smile as the dawn of the vernal day. In thy hand is the strength of thousands, and thy health is the health of millions. Thy palace is gladdened by the song of praise, and thy path perfumed by the breath of benediction. Thy subjects gaze upon thy greatness, and think of danger or misery no more. Why, Seged, wilt not thou partake the blessings thou bestowest? Why shouldst thou only forbear to rejoice in this general felicity? Why should thy face be clouded with anxiety, when the meanest of those who call thee sovereign gives the day to festivity, and the night to peace? At length, Seged, reflect and be wise. What is the gift of conquest but safety? Why are riches collected but to purchase happiness?"

Seged then ordered the house of pleasure, built in an island of the lake of Dambea, to be prepared for his reception. "I will retire," says he, "for ten days from tumult and care, from counsels and decrees. Long quiet is not the lot of the governors of nations, but a cessation of ten days cannot be denied me. This short interval of happiness may surely be secured from the interruption of fear or perplexity, sorrow or disappointment. I will exclude all trouble from my abode, and remove from my thoughts whatever may confuse the harmony of the concert, or abate the sweetness of the banquet. I will fill the whole capacity of my soul with enjoyment, and try what it is to live without a wish unsatisfied.

In a few days the orders were performed, and Seged hasted to the palace of Dambea, which stood in an island cultivated only for pleasure, planted with every flower that spreads its colours to the sun, and every shrub that sheds fragrance in the air. In one part of this extensive garden were open walks for excursions in the morning; in another, thick groves, and silent arbours, and bubbling fountains, for repose at noon. All that could solace the sense, or flatter the fancy, all that industry could extort from nature, or wealth furnish to art, all that conquest could seize, or beneficence attract, was collected together, and every perception of delight was excited and gratified.

Into this delicious region Seged summoned all the persons of his court who seemed eminently qualified to receive or communicate pleasure. His call was readily obeyed; the young, the fair, the vivacious, and the witty, were all in haste to be sated with felicity. They sailed jocund over the lake, which seemed to smooth its surface before them: their passage was cheered with music, and their hearts dilated with expectation.

Seged landing here with his band of pleasure, determined from that hour to break off all acquaintance with discontent, to give his heart for ten days to ease and jollity, and then fall back to the common state of man, and suffer his life to be diversified, as before, with joy and sorrow.

He immediately entered his chamber, to consider where he should begin his circle of happiness. He had all the artists of delight before him, but knew not whom to call, since he could not enjoy one but by delaying the performance of another. He chose and rejected, he resolved and changed his resolution, till his faculties were harassed, and his thoughts confused; then returned to the apartment where his presence was expected, with languid eyes and clouded countenance, and spread the infection of uneasiness over the whole assembly. He observed their depression, and was offended: for he found his vexation increased by those whom he expected to dissipate and relieve it. He retired again to his private chamber, and sought for consolation in his own mind; one thought flowed in upon another; a long succession of images seized his attention; the moments crept imperceptibly away through the gloom of pensiveness, till, having recovered his tranquillity, he lifted up his head, and saw the lake brightened by the setting sun. "Such," said Seged, sighing, "is the longest day of human existence: before we have learned to use it, we find it at an end."

The regret which he felt for the loss of so great a part of his first day, took from him all disposition to enjoy the evening; and after having endeavoured, for the sake of his attendants, to force an air of gaiety, and excite that mirth which he could not share, he resolved to refer his hopes to the next morning, and lay down to partake with the slaves of labour and poverty the blessing of sleep.

He rose early the second morning, and resolved now to be happy. He therefore fixed upon the gates of the palace an edict, importing, that whoever, during nine days, should appear in the presence of the king with a dejected countenance, or utter any expression of discontent or sorrow, should be driven for ever from the palace of Dambea.

This edict was immediately made known in every chamber of the court and bower of the gardens. Mirth was frighted away: and they who were before dancing in the lawns, or singing in the shades, were at once engaged in the care of regulating their looks, that Seged might find his will punctually obeyed, and see none among them liable to banishment.

Seged now met every face settled in a smile: but a smile that betrayed solicitude, timidity, and constraint. He ac-

costed his favourites with familiarity and softness; but they durst not speak without premeditation, lest they should be convicted of discontent or sorrow. He proposed diversions, to which no objection was made, because objection would have implied uneasiness; but they were regarded with indifference by the courtiers, who had no other desire than to signalize themselves by clamorous exultation. He offered various topics of conversation, but obtained only forced jests and laborious laughter; and, after many attempts to animate his train to confidence and alacrity, was obliged to confess to himself the impotence of command, and resign another day to grief and disappointment.

He at last relieved his companions from their terrours, and shut himself up in his chamber to ascertain, by different measures, the felicity of the succeeding days. At length he threw himself on the bed, and closed his eyes, but imagined, in his sleep, that his palace and gardens were overwhelmed by an inundation, and waked with all the terrours of a man struggling in the water. He composed himself again to rest, but was affrighted by an imaginary irruption into his kingdom; and striving, as is usual in dreams, without ability to move, fancied himself betrayed to his enemies, and again started up with horrour and indignation.

It was now day, and fear was so strongly impressed on his mind that he could sleep no more. He rose; but his thoughts were filled with the deluge and invasion, nor was he able to disengage his attention, or mingle with vacancy and ease in any amusement. At length his perturbation gave way to reason, and he resolved no longer to be harassed by visionary miseries; but, before this resolution could be completed, half the day had elapsed. He felt a new conviction of the uncertainty of human schemes, and could not forbear to bewail the weakness of that being, whose quiet was to be interrupted by vapours of the fancy. Having been first disturbed by a dream, he afterwards grieved that a dream could disturb him. He at last discovered that his terrours and grief were equally vain, and that to lose the present in lamenting the past was voluntarily to protract a melancholy vision. The third day was now declining, and Seged again resolved to be happy on the morrow.

No. 205. Tuesday, March 3, 1752.

——Volat ambiguis
Mobilis alis hora, nec ulli
Præstat velox fortuna fidem. Seneca.

On fickle wings the minutes haste,
And fortune's favours never last. F. Lewis.

On the fourth morning Seged rose early, refreshed with sleep, vigorous with health, and eager with expectation. He entered the garden attended by the princes and ladies of his court, and seeing nothing about him but airy cheerfulness, began to say to his heart, "This day shall be a day of pleasure." The sun played upon the water, the birds warbled in the groves, and the gales quivered among the branches. He roved from walk to walk as chance directed him, and sometimes listened to the songs, sometimes mingled with the dancers, sometimes let loose his imagination in flights of merriment; and sometimes uttered grave reflections and sententious maxims, and feasted on the admiration with which they were received.

Thus the day rolled on, without any accident of vexation, or intrusion of melancholy thoughts. All that beheld him caught gladness from his looks, and the sight of happiness conferred by himself filled his heart with satisfaction; but having passed three hours in this harmless luxury, he was alarmed on a sudden by an universal scream among the women, and turning back, saw the whole assembly flying in confusion. A young crocodile had risen out of the lake, and was ranging the garden in wantonness or hunger. Seged beheld him with indignation, as a disturber of his felicity, and chased him back into the lake, but could not persuade his retinue to stay, or free their hearts from the terrour which had seized upon them. The princesses enclosed themselves in the palace, and could yet scarcely believe themselves in safety. Every attention was fixed upon the late danger and escape, and no mind was any longer at leisure for gay sallies or careless prattle.

Seged had now no other employment than to contemplate the innumerable casualties which lie in ambush on every side to intercept the happiness of man, and break in upon the hour of delight and tranquillity. He had, however, the consolation of thinking, that he had not been now disappointed

by his own fault, and that the accident which had blasted the hopes of the day might easily be prevented by future caution.

That he might provide for the pleasure of the next morning, he resolved to repeal his penal edict, since he had already found that discontent and melancholy were not to be frighted away by the threats of authority, and that pleasure would only reside where she was exempted from control. He therefore invited all the companions of his retreat to unbounded pleasantry, by proposing prizes for those who should, on the following day, distinguish themselves by any festive performances; the tables of the antechamber were covered with gold and pearls, and robes and garlands decreed the rewards of those who could refine elegance or heighten pleasure.

At this display of riches every eye immediately sparkled, and every tongue was busied in celebrating the bounty and magnificence of the emperor. But when Seged entered, in hopes of uncommon entertainment from universal emulation, he found that any passion too strongly agitated puts an end to that tranquillity which is necessary to mirth, and that the mind that is to be moved by the gentle ventilations of gaiety must be first soothed by a total calm. Whatever we ardently wish to gain, we must, in the same degree, be afraid to lose, and fear and pleasure cannot dwell together.

All was now care and solicitude. Nothing was done or spoken, but with so visible an endeavour at perfection, as always failed to delight, though it sometimes forced admiration: and Seged could not but observe with sorrow, that his prizes had more influence than himself. As the evening approached, the contest grew more earnest, and those who were forced to allow themselves excelled began to discover the malignity of defeat, first by angry glances, and at last by contemptuous murmurs. Seged likewise shared the anxiety of the day; for, considering himself as obliged to distribute with exact justice the prizes which had been so zealously sought, he durst never remit his attention, but passed his time upon the rack of doubt, in balancing different kinds of merit, and adjusting the claims of all the competitors.

At last knowing that no exactness could satisfy those whose hopes he should disappoint, and thinking that, on a day set apart for happiness, it would be cruel to oppress any heart with sorrow, he declared that all had pleased him alike, and dismissed all with presents of equal value.

Seged soon saw that his caution had not been able to avoid offence. They who had believed themselves secure of the highest prizes, were not pleased to be levelled with the crowd; and though, by the liberality of the king, they received more

than his promise had entitled them to expect, they departed unsatisfied, because they were honoured with no distinction, and wanted an opportunity to triumph in the mortification of their opponents. "Behold here," said Seged, "the condition of him who places his happiness in the happiness of others." He then retired to meditate, and, while the courtiers were repining at his distributions, saw the fifth sun go down in discontent.

The next dawn renewed his resolution to be happy. But having learned how little he could effect by settled schemes or preparatory measures, he thought it best to give up one day entirely to chance, and left every one to please and be pleased his own way.

This relaxation of regularity diffused a general complacence through the whole court, and the emperor imagined that he had at last found the secret of obtaining an interval of felicity. But as he was roving in this careless assembly with equal carelessness, he overheard one of his courtiers in a close arbour murmuring alone: "What merit has Seged above us, that we should thus fear and obey him? a man, whom whatever he may have formerly performed, his luxury now shows to have the same weakness with ourselves?" This charge affected him the more, as it was uttered by one whom he had always observed among the most object of his flatterers. At first his indignation prompted him to severity; but reflecting, that what was spoken without intention to be heard was to be considered as only thought, and was, perhaps, but the sudden burst of casual and temporary vexation, he invented some decent pretence to send him away, that his retreat might not be tainted with the breath of envy; and, after the struggle of deliberation was past, and all desire of revenge utterly suppressed, passed the evening not only with tranquillity, but triumph, though none but himself was conscious of the victory.

The remembrance of his clemency cheered the beginning of the seventh day, and nothing happened to disturb the pleasure of Seged, till, looking on the tree that shaded him, he recollected that under a tree of the same kind he had passed the night after his defeat in the kingdom of Goiama. The reflection on his loss, his dishonour, and the miseries which his subjects suffered from the invader, filled him with sadness. At last he shook off the weight of sorrow, and began to solace himself with his usual pleasures; when his tranquillity was again disturbed by jealousies which the late contest for the prizes had produced, and which, having in vain tried to

pacify them by persuasion, he was forced to silence by command.

On the eighth morning Seged was awakened early by an unusual hurry in the apartments, and, inquiring the cause, was told that the princess Balkis was seized with sickness. He rose, and, calling the physicans, found that they had little hope of her recovery. Here was an end of jollity; all his thoughts were now upon his daughter, whose eyes he closed on the tenth day.

Such were the days which Seged of Ethiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter may presume to say, "This day shall be a day of happiness."

No. 206. Saturday, March 7, 1752.

——Propositi nondum pudet, atque eadem est mens,
Ut bona summa putes, aliena vivere quadra. Juv.

But harden'd by affronts, and still the same,
Lost to all sense of honour and of fame,
Thou yet canst love to haunt the great man's board,
And think no supper good but with a lord. Bowles.

When Diogenes was once asked, what kind of wine he liked best, he answered, "That which is drunk at the cost of others."

Though the character of Diogenes has never excited any general zeal of imitation, there are many who resemble him in his taste of wine; many who are frugal, though not abstemious; whose appetites, though too powerful for reason, are kept under restraint by avarice; and to whom all delicacies lose their flavour, when they cannot be obtained but at their own expense.

Nothing produces more singularity of manners, and inconstancy of life, than the conflict of opposite vices in the same mind. He that uniformly pursues any purpose, whether good or bad, has a settled principle of action; and, as he may always find associates who are travelling the same way, is countenanced by example, and sheltered in the multitude; but a man actuated at once by different desires must move in a direction peculiar to himself, and suffer that reproach which we are naturally inclined to bestow on those who devi-

ate from the rest of the world, even without inquiring whether they are worse or better.

Yet this conflict of desires sometimes produces wonderful efforts. To riot in far-fetched dishes, or surfeit with unexhausted variety, and yet practise the most rigid economy, is surely an art which may justly draw the eyes of mankind upon them whose industry or judgment has enabled them to attain it. To him, indeed, who is content to break open the chests or mortgage the manors of his ancestors, that he may hire the ministers of excess at the highest price, gluttony is an easy science: yet we often hear the votaries of luxury boasting of the elegance which they owe to the taste of others; relating with rapture the succession of dishes with which their cooks and caterers supply them; and expecting their share of praise with the discoverers of arts and the civilizers of nations. But to shorten the way to convivial happiness, by eating without cost, is a secret hitherto in few hands, but which certainly deserves the curiosity of those whose principal employment is their dinner, and who see the sun rise with no other hope than that they shall fill their bellies before it sets.

Of them that have within my knowledge attempted this scheme of happiness, the greater part have been immediately obliged to desist; and some, whom their first attempts flattered with success, were reduced by degrees to a few tables, from which they were at last chased to make way for others; and, having long habituated themselves to superfluous plenty, growled away their latter years in discontented competence.

None enter the regions of luxury with higher expectations than men of wit, who imagine that they shall never want a welcome to that company whose ideas they can enlarge, or whose imaginations they can elevate, and believe themselves able to pay for their wine with the mirth which it qualifies them to produce. Full of this opinion they crowd with little invitation wherever the smell of a feast allures them, but are seldom encouraged to repeat their visits, being dreaded by the pert as rivals, and hated by the dull as disturbers of the company.

No man has been so happy in gaining and keeping the privilege of living at luxurious houses as Gulosulus, who, after thirty years of continual revelry, has now established, by uncontroverted prescription, his claim to partake of every entertainment, and whose presence they who aspire to the praise of a sumptuous table are careful to procure on a day of importance, by sending the invitation a fortnight before.

Gulosulus entered the world without any eminent degree of

merit; but was careful to frequent houses where persons of rank resorted. By being often seen he became in time known; and, from sitting in the same room, was suffered to mix in idle conversation, or assisted to fill up a vacant hour, when better amusement was not readily to be had. From the coffee-house he was sometimes taken away to dinner; and, as no man refuses the acquaintance of him whom he sees admitted to familiarity by others of equal dignity, when he had been met at a few tables, he with less difficulty found the way to more, till at last he was regularly expected to appear wherever preparations are made for a feast, within the circuit of his acquaintance.

When he was thus by accident initiated in luxury, he felt in himself no inclination to retire from a life of so much pleasure, and therefore very seriously considered how he might continue it. Great qualities, or uncommon accomplishments, he did not find necessary; for he had already seen that merit rather enforces respect than attracts fondness; and as he thought no folly greater than that of losing a dinner for any other gratification, he often congratulated himself, that he had none of that disgusting excellence which impresses awe upon greatness, and condemns its possessors to the society of those who are wise or brave, and indigent as themselves.

Gulosulus, having never allotted much of his time to books or meditation, had no opinion in philosophy or politics, and was not in danger of injuring his interest by dogmatical positions, or violent contradiction. If a dispute arose, he took care to listen with earnest attention; and, when either speaker grew vehement and loud, turned towards him with eager quickness, and uttered a short phrase of admiration as if surprised by such cogency of argument as he had never known before. By this silent concession, he generally preserved in either controvertist such a conviction of his own superiority, as inclined him rather to pity than irritate his adversary, and prevented those outrages which are sometimes produced by the rage of defeat, or petulence of triumph.

Gulosulus was never embarrassed but when he was required to declare his sentiments before he had been able to discover to which side the master of the house inclined; for it was his invariable rule to adopt the notions of those that invited him.

It will sometimes happen that the insolence of wealth breaks into contemptuousness, or the turbulence of wine requires a vent; and Gulosulus seldom fails of being singled out on such emergencies, as one on whom any experiment of

ribaldry may be safely tried. Sometimes his lordship finds himself inclined to exhibit a specimen of raillery for the diversion of his guests, and Gulosulus always supplies him with a subject of merriment. But he has learned to consider rudeness and indignities as familiarities that entitle him to greater freedom: he comforts himself, that those who treat and insult him pay for their laughter, and that he keeps his money while they enjoy their jest.

His chief policy consists in selecting some dish from every course, and recommending it to the company, with an air so decisive, that no one ventures to contradict him. By this practice he acquires at a feast a kind of dictatorial authority; his taste becomes the standard of pickles and seasoning, and he is venerated by the professors of epicurism, as the only man who understands the niceties of cookery.

Whenever a new sauce is imported, or any innovation made in the culinary system, he procures the earliest intelligence, and the most authentic receipt; and, by communicating his knowledge under proper injunctions of secrecy, gains a right of tasting his own dish whenever it is prepared, that he may tell whether his directions have been fully understood.

By this method of life Gulosulus has so impressed on his imagination the dignity of feasting, that he has no other topic of talk, or subject of meditation. His calendar is a bill of fare; he measures the year by successive dainties. The only common places of his memory are his meals; and if you ask him at what time an event happened, he considers whether he heard it after a dinner of turbot or venison. He knows, indeed, that those who value themselves upon sense, learning, or piety, speak of him with contempt; but he considers them as wretches, envious or ignorant, who do not know his happiness, or wish to supplant him; and declares to his friends, that he is fully satisfied with his own conduct, since he has fed every day on twenty dishes, and yet doubled his estate.

No. 207. Tuesday, March 10, 1752.

Solve senescentem mature sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus. Hor.

The voice of reason cries with winning force,
Loose from the rapid car your aged horse,
Lest, in the race derided, left behind,
He drag his jaded limbs and burst his wind. Francis.

Such is the emptiness of human enjoyment, that we are always impatient of the present. Attainment is followed by neglect, and possession by disgust; and the malicious remark of the Greek epigrammatist on marriage may be applied to every other course of life, that its two days of happiness are the first and the last.

Few moments are more pleasing than those in which the mind is concerting measures for a new undertaking. From the first hint that wakens the fancy till the hour of actual execution, all is improvement and progress, triumph, and felicity. Every hour brings additions to the original scheme, suggests some new expedient to secure success, or discovers consequential advantages not hitherto foreseen. While preparations are made, and materials accumulated, day glides after day through elysian prospects, and the heart dances to the song of hope.

Such is the pleasure of projecting, that many content themselves with a succession of visionary schemes, and wear out their allotted time in the calm amusement of contriving what they never attempt or hope to execute.

Others, not able to feast their imagination with pure ideas, advance somewhat nearer to the grossness of action, with great diligence collect whatever is requisite to their design, and, after a thousand researches and consultations, are snatched away by death, as they stand *in procinctu* waiting for a proper opportunity to begin.

If there were no other end of life, than to find some adequate solace for every day, I know not whether any condition could be preferred to that of the man who involves himself in his own thoughts, and never suffers experience to show him the vanity of speculation; for no sooner are notions reduced to practice, than tranquillity and confidence forsake the breast; every day brings its task, and often without bringing abilities to perform it: difficulties embarrass, uncertainty perplexes, opposition retards, censure exasperates, or neglect

depresses. We proceed because we have begun; we complete our design that the labour already spent may not be vain; but as expectation gradually dies away, the gay smile of alacrity disappears, we are compelled to implore severer powers and trust the event to patience and constancy.

When once our labour has begun, the comfort that enables us to endure it is the prospect of its end; for though in every long work there are some joyous intervals of self-applause, when the attention is recreated by unexpected facility, and the imagination soothed by incidental excellencies; yet the toil with which performance struggles after idea, is so irksome and disgusting, and so frequent is the necessity of resting below that perfection which we imagined within our reach, that seldom any man obtains more from his endeavours than a painful conviction of his defects, and a continual resuscitation of desires which he feels himself unable to gratify.

So certainly is weariness the concomitant of our undertakings, that every man, in whatever he is engaged, consoles himself with the hope of change; if he has made his way by assiduity to public employment, he talks among his friends of the delight of retreat; if, by the necessity of solitary application, he is secluded from the world, he listens with a beating heart to distant noises, longs to mingle with living beings, and resolves to take hereafter his fill of diversions, or display his abilities on the universal theatre, and enjoy the pleasure of distinction and applause.

Every desire, however innocent, grows dangerous, as by long indulgence it becomes ascendant in the mind. When we have been much accustomed to consider any thing as capable of giving happiness, it is not easy to restrain our ardour, or to forbear some precipitation in our advances, and irregularity in our pursuits. He that has cultivated the tree, watched the swelling bud and opening blossom, and pleased himself with computing how much every sun and shower add to its growth, scarcely stays till the fruit has obtained its maturity, but defeats his own cares by eagerness to reward them. When we have diligently laboured for any purpose, we are willing to believe that we have attained it, and because we have already done much, too suddenly conclude that no more is to be done.

All attraction is increased by the approach of the attracting body. We never find ourselves so desirous to finish, as in the latter part of our work, or so impatient of delay, as when we know that delay cannot be long. Thus unseasonable importunity of discontent may be partly imputed to languor

and weariness, which must always oppress those more whose toil has been longer continued; but the greater part usually proceeds from frequent contemplation of that ease which is now considered as within reach, and which when it has once flattered our hopes, we cannot suffer to be withheld.

In some of the noblest compositions of wit, the conclusion falls below the vigour and spirit of the first books; and as a genius is not to be degraded by the imputation of human failings, the cause of this declension is commonly sought in the structure of the work, and plausible reasons are given why in the defective part less ornament was necessary, or less could be admitted. But, perhaps, the author would have confessed, that his fancy was tired, and his perseverance broken; that he knew his design to be unfinished, but that, when he saw the end so near, he could no longer refuse to be at rest.

Against the instillations of this frigid opiate, the heart should be secured by all the considerations which once concurred to kindle the ardour of enterprise. Whatever motive first incited action, has still greater force to stimulate perseverance; since he that might have lain still at first in blameless obscurity, cannot afterwards desist but with infamy and reproach. He whom a doubtful promise of distant good could encourage to set difficulties at defiance, ought not to remit his vigour, when he has almost obtained his recompense. To faint or loiter, when only the last efforts are required, is to steer the ship through tempests, and abandon it to the winds in sight of land; it is to break the ground and scatter the seed, and at last to neglect the harvest.

The masters of rhetoric direct, that the most forcible arguments be produced in the latter part of an oration, lest they should be effaced or perplexed by supervenient images. This precept may be justly extended to the series of life: Nothing is ended with honour, which does not conclude better than it began. It is not sufficient to maintain the first vigour; for excellence loses its effect upon the mind by custom, as light after a time ceases to dazzle. Admiration must be continued by that novelty which first produced it, and how much soever is given, there must always be reason to imagine that more remains.

We not only are most sensible of the last impressions, but such is the unwillingness of mankind to admit transcendent merit, that, though it be difficult to obliterate the reproach of miscarriages by any subsequent achievement, however illustrious, yet the reputation raised by a long train of success may be finally ruined by a single failure; for weakness

or errour will be always remembered by that malice and envy which it gratifies.

For the prevention of that disgrace, which lassitude and negligence may bring at last upon the greatest performances, it is necessary to proportion carefully our labour to our strength. If the design comprises many parts, equally essential, and therefore not to be separated, the only time for caution is before we engage; the powers of the mind must be then impartially estimated, and it must be remembered, that not to complete the plan is not to have begun it; and that nothing is done, while any thing is omitted.

But if the task consists in the repetition of single acts, no one of which derives its efficacy from the rest, it may be attempted with less scruple, because there is always opportunity to retreat with honour. The danger is only, lest we expect from the world the indulgence with which most are disposed to treat themselves: and in the hour of listlessness imagine, that the diligence of one day will atone for the idleness of another, and that applause begun by approbation will be continued by habit.

He that is himself weary will soon weary the public. Let him therefore lay down his employment, whatever it be, who can no longer exert his former activity or attention; let him not endeavour to struggle with censure, or obstinately infest the stage till a general hiss commands him to depart.

No. 208. Saturday, March 14, 1752.

Ἡράκλειτος ἐγὼ· τί με ὦ κάτω ἕλκετ' ἄμυστοι;
Οὐχ' ὑμῖν ἐπόνων, τοῖς δέ μ' ἐπιστάμενοις·
Εἷς ἐμοὶ ἄνθρωπος τρισμύριοι· οἱ δ' ἀναριθμοὶ
Οὐδείς· ταῦτ' ἀοιδῶ καὶ παρὰ Περσεφόνῃ. Diog. Laert.

Begone, ye blockheads, Heraclitus cries,
And leave my labours to the learned and wise;
By wit, by knowledge, studious to be read,
I scorn the multitude, alive and dead.

Time, which puts an end to all human pleasures and sorrows, has likewise concluded the labours of the Rambler. Having supported for two years the anxious employment of a periodical writer, and multiplied my essays to upwards of two hundred, I have now determined to desist.

The reason of this resolution it is of little importance to declare, since justification is unnecessary when no objection is made. I am far from supposing, that the cessation of my performances will raise any inquiry, for I have never been much a favourite of the public, nor can boast that, in the progress of my undertaking, I have been animated by the rewards of the liberal, the caresses of the great, or the praises of the eminent.

But I have no design to gratify pride by submission, or malice by lamentation; nor think it reasonable to complain of neglect from those whose regard I never solicited. If I have not been distinguished by the distributors of literary honours, I have seldom descended to the arts by which favour is obtained. I have seen the meteors of fashion rise and fall, without any attempt to add a moment to their duration. I have never complied with temporary curiosity, nor enabled my readers to discuss the topic of the day; I have rarely exemplified my assertions by living characters; in my papers no man could look for censures of his enemies, or praises of himself; and they only were expected to peruse them, whose passions left them leisure for abstracted truth, and whom virtue could please by its naked dignity.

To some, however, I am indebted for encouragement, and to others for assistance. The number of my friends was never great, but they have been such as would not suffer me to think that I was writing in vain, and I did not feel much dejection from the want of popularity.

My obligations having not been frequent, my acknowledgments may be soon despatched. I can restore to all my correspondents their productions, with little diminution of the bulk of my volumes, though not without the loss of some pieces to which particular honours have been paid.

The parts from which I claim no other praise than that of having given them an opportunity of appearing, are the four billets in the tenth paper, the second letter in the fifteenth, the thirtieth, the forty-fourth, the ninety-seventh, and the hundreth papers, and the second letter in the hundred and seventh.

Having thus deprived myself of many excuses which candour might have admitted for the inequality of my compositions, being no longer able to allege the necessity of gratifying correspondents, the importunity with which publication was solicited, or obstinacy with which correction was rejected, I must remain accountable for all my faults, and submit, without subterfuge, to the censures of criticism, which, however, I shall not endeavour to soften by a formal deprecation,

or to overbear by the influence of a patron. The supplications of an author never yet reprieved him a moment from oblivion; and, though greatness has sometimes sheltered guilt, it can afford no protection to ignorance or dullness. Having hitherto attempted only the propagation of truth, I will not at last violate it by the confession of terrours which I do not feel: having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication.

The seeming vanity with which I have sometimes spoken of myself, would perhaps require an apology, were it not extenuated by the example of those who have published essays before me, and by the privilege which every nameless writer has been hitherto allowed. "A mask," says Castiglione, "confers a right of acting and speaking with less restraint, even when the wearer happens to be known." He that is discovered without his own consent, may claim some indulgence, and cannot be rigorously called to justify those follies or frolics which his disguise must prove him desirous to conceal.

But I have been cautious lest this offence should be frequently or grossly committed; for as one of the philosophers directs us to live with a friend, as with one that is sometime to become an enemy, I have always thought it the duty of an anonymous author to write, as if he expected to be hereafter known.

I am willing to flatter myself with hopes, that, by collecting these papers, I am not preparing, for my future life either shame or repentance. That all are happily imagined, or accurately polished, that the same sentiments have not sometimes recurred, or the same expressions been too frequently repeated, I have not confidence in my abilities sufficient to warrant. He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topic, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce.

Whatever shall be the final sentence of mankind, I have at least endeavoured to deserve their kindness. I have laboured to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations. Something, perhaps, I have added to the elegance of its construction, and something to the harmony of its cadence. When common words were less pleasing to

the ear, or lessd istinct in their signification, I have familiarised the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas, but have rarely admitted any word not authorized by former writers? for I believe that whoever knows the English tongue in its present extent, will be able to express his thoughts without further help from other nations.

As it has been my principal design to inculcate wisdom or piety, I have allotted few papers to the idle sports of imagination. Some, perhaps, may be found, of which the highest excellence is harmless merriment; but scarcely any man is so steadily serious as not to complain, that the severity of dictatorial instruction has been too seldom relieved, and that he is driven by the sternness of the Rambler's philosophy to more cheerful and airy companions.

Next to the excursions of fancy are the disquisitions of criticism, which, in my opinion, is only to be ranked among the subordinate and instrumental arts. Arbitrary decision and general exclamation I have carefully avoided, by asserting nothing without a reason, and establishing all my principles of judgment on unalterable and evident truth.

In the pictures of life, I have never been so studious of novelty, or surprise, as to depart wholly from all resemblance; a fault which writers deservedly celebrated frequently commit, that they may raise as the occasion requires, either mirth or abhorrence. Some enlargement may be allowed to declamation, and some exaggeration to burlesque; but as they deviate farther from reality, they become less useful, because their lessons will fail of application. The mind of the reader is carried away from the contemplation of his own manners; he finds in himself no likeness to the phantom before him; and though he laughs or rages, is not reformed.

The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no blame or praise of man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth.

Αὐτῶν ἐκ μακάρων ἀντάξιος εἴη ἀμοιβῆ.

Celestial pow'rs! that piety regard,
From you my labours wait their last reward.

END OF VOL. III.

[redacted]

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